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THE GENERAL ELECTION, 1885.



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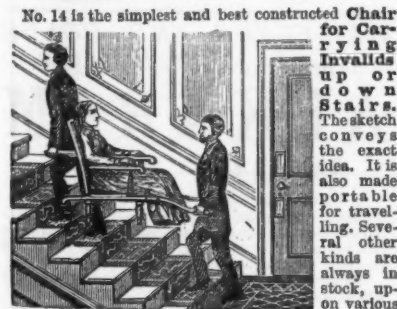
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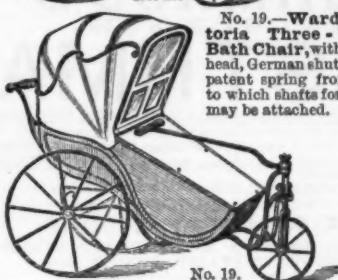


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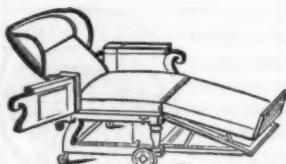
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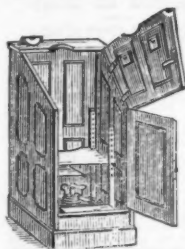
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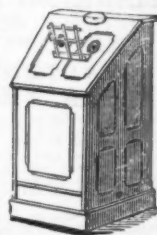
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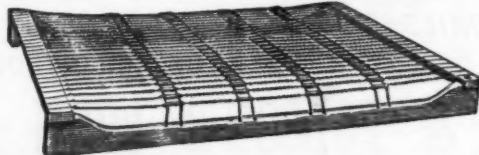


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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

JANUARY 1886.

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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

JANUARY 1886.

Children of Gibeon.

BY WALTER BESANT.

PROLOGUE.

PART I.

POLLY-WHICH-IS-MARLA.

‘SIT down, Hester, and let us talk. It is seventeen years since you saw me last.’

‘It isn’t the time I grudge, my lady,’ Hester replied, plunging her bare arms into the soap-suds; ‘it isn’t the time, but the things are promised, and a laundress’s word is her work. If she breaks her word, it’s leave the things and change the washing. And a lovely drying day.’

She spoke with two pins between her lips. People of her walk in life, unless they happen to be Chinamen, always while they are standing at the wash-tub carry two pins in the corner of the mouth—they are not even safety pins; and the practice gives them for the time a curious thickness of speech.

‘Let me talk and work at the same time, my lady, though it is such a long, long time since last I set eyes upon you; and a beautiful little creature you were, to be sure. Lor’ a me!’

She was a woman of five or six and thirty: country-bred, as you could very easily tell by the rosy hue of her cheek and by its amplitude: by her figure, full and comely, and by her breadth of shoulder. The London air—it is the fog in it, perhaps, or the smoke in it—produces in the second and all succeeding genera-

tions, a diminishing effect: it narrows and slopes the shoulders; it contracts the figure, it shortens the stature, and it makes the features small; in fact, it makes the London girl small all over, yet it doth not leave her without charms of her own, as is daily testified by many. This woman was a big woman, looking still as if she was fresh from field and country lane; her forehead was lined, her mouth was drawn—but this might be due to the presence of the two pins—her eyes were limpid and full and in colour brown, something like the eyes of a hare when she is not frightened. They were set and framed in a network of lines and crows'-feet, and when she was alone they had a trick of hardening. This may have been caused by trouble, or perhaps it was only the natural result of the weekly arithmetical exercise peculiar to her profession, and worthy of a Babbage, in which the good woman had to enumerate, divide out, add up, and make to come right, all the socks, handkerchiefs, shirts, collars, and cuffs entrusted to her care. As for her features, they were plain and even rugged. A working woman may very naturally acquire, by the age of six-and-thirty, from her life of struggle and work, a very considerable amount of hardness. But with Hester the ruggedness seemed part of the original mould, as if Nature had left the face in the rough, without the final stroke of the chisel. I do not think that Hester had ever been beautiful; but by reason of her hair, which was still plentiful, and of a warm red colour, and her limpid eyes, she may have been, in her youth, pleasing to look upon. It seems a fond thing to speculate upon the possible beauty of a washerwoman in the vanished days when she was young. But it has a certain interest for us, because she had children with whom we have to do, and it is a melancholy reflection that so little interest is generally taken in the past beauty of a woman, whether she be a washerwoman or a duchess.

As for her expression, it was grave and even sad at times; and when she was hanging out the clothes, or when she was ironing, or whenever there were no pins in her mouth, her lips had a habit of silently monologuising, moving in the manner of one who speaks with great rapidity, but with no audible utterance. What she said in these soliloquies, one knows not; perhaps she was rehearsing the weekly returns, as, 'Six p'r o' socks, six; ten handkerchiefs, ten; seven shirts, seven,' . . . and so on; accuracy in a washerwoman being as desirable as despatch in a dentist. Or in that silent and mysterious way she may have been recalling scenes in her past history. If so, they were not pleasing scenes.

Mrs. Monument's face, to those few who can read the history of a life in a face, showed unmistakable signs of trouble ; any one who knew the history of that trouble could without difficulty point to individual lines, wrinkles, and crows'-feet directly caused at various stages of it ; to most of those who were ignorant of this history, and perhaps too much occupied by their own misfortunes to think much about other people's, the lines about the mouth, the wrinkles in the forehead, the set eyes, and the hardened mouth conveyed no more meaning than an inscription in cuneiform. It is, in fact, only the novelist, and he only for purposes of his art, who studies the human face when it is past the time of beauty and strives to read, with the help of what he knows, the emotions and sorrows which have left their mark upon it. It is too often, however, like reading a Greek classic with the help of an English crib, which has lost the charm of language.

'Seventeen years ago, Hester,' said Lady Mildred, 'I was taken to see your wedding at the village church, and I thought you the most beautiful and the most enviable creature I had ever beheld, in your white dress and your curls.'

Hester played with the soap-suds and smiled. Then she frowned at her own foolishness, and then she smiled again. Since Lady Mildred was so good as to say she had once looked like a beautiful woman, it was not for her to contradict her ; henceforth the memory of her wedding-day would possess another and a brighter association. But Hester, who was truthful by nature, had never been accustomed to think of herself as beautiful. Plain girls sometimes make their own consolations for themselves—notably, the comfortable assurance that as many plain girls get lovers as pretty girls—but they are never under any illusions as to their own looks. Hester, however, permitted her mind to dwell for a moment on the memory of her ruddy and rosy cheeks and white dress, and on the fashions of the year 1848, and the people in the church, and she smiled again.

As for the day, it was the brightest and warmest day in June ever known, and as for the year, it was in 1866. The house was one of a small row of little five-roomed cottages, irregular, picturesque, with red-tiled roofs and red brick chimneys ; they have now all been pulled down, not because the landlord was one of those who despise old things and love to tear down and destroy, like a First Lord of the Admiralty with the old ships, but because if they had not been pulled down, they would have fallen down. Wherefore now, a terrace of little houses with bow-windows, built

of grey bricks, all exactly alike and with slate roofs, stands in their place, and those who remember the former cottages fall to weeping when they pass that way. The houses stood in a strange and mysterious place, on the actual and visible marge of London, looking out upon the low green levels with which Hackney Marsh surrounds the river Lea and prohibits the further march of brick. White mists lie over the Marsh in winter afternoons and autumn evenings, and make it ghostly to look upon ; but it is a keen and healthy air which sweeps across the plain, a good drying air for linen, and a bracing air for children with strong lungs and sound throats. Each of the cottages stood behind a long narrow strip of garden, which was by some laid out and planted with onions, cabbages, peas, potatoes, and beans, but in more than one case was left fallow, so to speak, dotted here and there with patches of turf, and decorated with bare masts or poles instead of trees, connected by ropes, with hanging linen instead of waving foliage and blossom. It was, in fact, a convenient spot for washerwomen, and Mrs. Monument 'did,' single-handed, or with only occasional help, for two or three of the first families in Homerton and Hackney, sister suburbs, which melt imperceptibly into one another, and differ in no other respect than that of magnitude. The fruits of her labour hung, every fine day and all the year round, upon the lines in the garden, and floated in the breeze, bulbous, spherical, wafted this way and that, with all the undulations and the graces of a corpulent fairy, across the flower-beds where no flowers ever grew.

Beyond the garden the eye roamed free and unchecked across the Marsh, a bare flat expanse of green turf, cut into irregular shapes by the elevated roads which cross it, deserted in the morning, but in summer evenings and on Sundays covered with the lusty youth of Hackney Wick ; beyond the Marsh is the Cut, up and down which go majestically the barges of the river Lea : then more marsh, and then the Lea itself, narrowed by reason of the Cut, with high banks of mud and tortuous, as if resolved to keep its character to the very end. There are two bridges over it—one a narrow footway of wood, rustic, ancient, not without beauty ; the other new and broad for carts and cyclists as well as for those who go afoot. The Marsh is not, it must be confessed, one of the most romantically beautiful spots upon the earth ; but it lies open to all the winds of heaven ; those who walk across its causeways may perhaps still get ague as they used to do in the brave old days, but at least they are outside the houses, which is

a very precious thing to dwellers in Hackney and its sisters. In the eyes of Mrs. Monument the Marsh was chiefly delightful because all the winds which blew across it came to her drying ground fresh and free from smut. Can Hyde Park boast as much?

The cottage contained a kitchen or laundry, with a red brick floor, looking upon the garden. Here were the wash-tubs and a boiler, and pattens and a board to stand upon. Behind it was a sitting-room, or living-room, and above were two bed-rooms. Naturally the steam of the tubs filled the whole house and ascended continually unto the heavens like the smoke of Vesta's sacred fire—none of the Monument children except Polly can ever pass the steam of a wash-tub without being instantly transported back to Hackney Marsh and filled with the sense of a universal washing-day, as if the rivers and lakes of the whole world had been turned into hot and steaming soap-suds. Outside the door was a rustic porch grown over with jessamine, and within the porch at the open door stood a young lady. In the year 1866 she was four-and-twenty years of age, and in the eyes of her generation she passed for an extremely beautiful woman; her portrait may be found by the curious adorning any Book of Beauty belonging to that time. She wore a huge crinoline, she carried her hair in a big net, and, after the fashion of her time, she made herself look as short of face and of limb, as dumpy of figure as nature would allow. When one thinks of that time, and of the truly sinful waste and throwing away of feminine loveliness and grace which went on daily and from year to year, it is not pity that one feels so much as blank wonder that women could be such fools as so to disfigure and transform themselves.

As regards Lady Mildred Eldridge, one would have felt a very human pity, because, in addition to her hideous crinoline, she wore widow's weeds, with a vast quantity of that dolorous crape which every husband who truly loves his wife ought to forbid in his will.

'And to think, my Lady,' said Hester, 'of your remembering me after all these years!'

'I remember, Hester, how sorry I was when you left the nursery to get married. It was the first grief of my life.'

The woman's face darkened.

'To get married!' she echoed bitterly. 'Oh! what fools girls are! Just to get married! To leave a pleasant home full of kind ladies who'd never throw them over, and run into the arms of the first chap who comes along with a smile and promise! If it

wasn't for the blessed children, I sometimes wish I had thrown myself into the cold river the morning of my wedding. Perhaps it would have been better for them too.' She wrung a handful of linen as if she wished it had been her husband's neck.

'Hester!' The young widow was frightened at her old nurse's vehemence. 'Hester! Tell me something about it. And why have you taken your maiden name again?'

'I changed my name to get out of my husband's way; but it was no use.'

'Out of his way?'

'Yes, my Lady. But never mind about my troubles. And you with your own to bear, and a widow's cap and all at your age, poor dear!'

'I have been married too,' Lady Mildred replied calmly, 'and I have lost my husband. But about yours, Hester?'

'He is dead,' the woman replied, with an obvious effort, as if it pained her so much as to speak of him. 'He is dead, and I pray that my children may never hear tell of him!'

'I am sorry. Poor Hester!'

'There are some troubles.' She left the wash-tub and sat down, wrapping her apron about her bare arms. 'There are some troubles, my Lady, that women needn't be ashamed of—such as men are born to as the sparks fly upwards—and there's some troubles that we can't think of, though we must, at times—let alone speak of. Troubles that spoil the lives of innocent children.'

'There are, indeed, Hester. If these were yours, I am sorry for you.'

'We came up to London,' Mrs. Monument went on, 'to get work. That's what he called it. Oh! Fine work he got! He was a locksmith, and it's a trade which finds out a man's cleverness and leads him into temptations. Whatever his work was, there was always plenty of money and I was happy. Oh! who could have told beforehand what was going to happen? Then my Joe was born.'

'What did happen, Hester?'

'Nothing, my Lady,' she replied evasively; 'only that I went to live by myself with the baby, and took my maiden name, and hoped never to see him again.'

'And then?'

'Oh! he found me out. But he is—buried.' There was just a slight pause, as if she was not quite certain whether he was

actually buried or only dead, and still awaiting that rite, like one of the melancholy ghosts on the shores of Styx; though if they knew what was waiting for them on the other side they would perhaps send up word to their relations not to bury their bodies.

Everybody has remarked the fondness which all well-regulated women entertain for a good round solid aphorism. It never loses its freshness for them. Therefore it was natural for Lady Mildred to remark solemnly: 'Where there is no escape from evil, save by death, it is better that one should die.'

'Provided it's the right one,' said Hester. 'Because, if I'd been took, what in the world would ha' become of the blessed children?'

'Where are your children, Hester? How many of them have you?'

'Polly-which-is-Marla,' replied Hester, as if the four words made but one name, 'is playing among the linen—bless her!—where she can't come to no more harm than a slap in the cheek from a wet arm or a flapping skirt.' She went out into the sunshine and shaded her eyes with her hand, and called, 'Polly! Polly! Come to mother!'

Then there came running out from among the hanging clothes a little girl of two years. She was an extraordinarily beautiful child, though her frock was ragged and dirty, and the cap tied round her head had seen long service. Her short brown curls lay over her forehead and pressed out the cap; her deep, mysterious eyes gazed shyly at the visitor; her parted lips made the sweetest rosebud of a mouth. Two years old! This is the age when the infant passes into the child; she is still irresponsible, without morals, and void of any principles whatever; she still possesses the infantine wonder; life is still full of novelty for her; none of the gilding has been rubbed off; she is always making new experiments, and continually breaking out in new directions; she talks a most charming language; she utters the most unexpected sentiments; and she does the most delightful things. She is a Flirt, a Jilt, a Coquette; she is as unreasonable as the wind; she is as uncertain as the weather; she is a Doll, a Treasure, a Toy, an Idol, and a little Goddess. Of such there are tens of thousands in this land of ours, and I wonder how many of us have the grace to thank God for them.

'Why, Hester'—Lady Mildred was startled at this miracle of beauty—'your child is an angel; she is a fairy. Are all your children like this one?'

'Three of them are,' said Hester. 'They take after their father, who was as handsome, though undersized, as he was clever. Cleverness it was which ruined him, and his good looks did him no more good than to make him wicked and false.'

'What is her name, Hester?'

'The name, by rights, is Marla, but we call her Polly, because the other is an outlandish name.'

'Why did you call her Marla?'

'It was her father's doing. He would have it, and as I'd my choice with Joe and Sam, I had to give way, though I blushed for shame when I told the clergyman at the font.'

'Marla! It is an odd name.'

'My man, you see, my Lady, was fond of his book, and perhaps he found the name in one of the books he was always reading. But there—it doesn't matter now; and I always call her Polly, which is handier and more natural.'

'Yes—it is handier. Do you know, Hester?—Lady Mildred had the child in her arms—'it is strange! Do you know that the child is strangely like my own little girl?'

'Why, good gracious!' Hester threw up her arms in astonishment at her own forgetfulness. 'To think that I never even asked your Ladyship if you had any of your own! But of course you have. There's the Mother in your look, plain to see. Lord! the hunger in a childless woman's eyes!'

'I have only one—a little girl—about this child's age.'

'None but a woman with children of her own,' Hester continued, 'knows how to carry a baby right. Now to see your Ladyship with that little one!'

'Where are your other children? I should like to see them all.'

'I've got four more.' Hester forgot her work and the beautiful drying day in her maternal pride, 'four more. First there's Joe. He's sixteen now, and tall for his age. Apprenticed to his father's trade and handsome, though not clever, as his father was, which gives me hopes for him. It's the stupid lads that turn out the steadiest and do the best. After Joe comes Sam, and he's seven, bless his heart! For sturdiness and appetite there isn't his equal.'

'Nine years between the first and second?'

'Nine years, my lady. Because my husband—he deserted me, I told you—I came away with little Joe. But he found me out after all those years, and came back to me. And then came Sam. After Sam came Claude.'

‘Was that name your choosing, Hester?’

‘Lord, no, my Lady. I should never have thought of such a fine name for my boy. It was his father’s choice. He named the boy after some one in his books—Claude something, who my husband said was one of the greatest men who ever lived. But he only seemed to me a rogue and a robber.’

‘It could not be Claude Duval,’ said Lady Mildred, at hazard.

‘I think that was the name; but I don’t rightly remember. When I took the baby to church I could only remember the first name, so he is Claude, and nothing else. He is six now, and a beautiful boy, more like his father than me, and as like as two peas to Polly—which-is-Marla. After him comes Melenda, who is five, another heathenish name. But it’s his choice, not mine. She’s like Sam, not Claude. Just after Polly was born my husband left me again—thank goodness for it.’

‘Do not let us talk about him, Hester,’ said Lady Mildred.

‘It only vexes you.’

Just then the children came home from school. First came Sam, a sturdy, red-haired child with bright eyes, and a face painfully like his mother’s—chiselled hastily and with just a few strokes, rough but effective, the result being a broad forehead, strong chin, large mouth, and rosy cheeks. After him walked Claude—a pretty boy of six, who had very much the air of a gentleman in disguise, though his clothes were tolerably ragged. Last there came a little red-haired girl of five, exactly like her brother Sam. They emerged from the white curtains of drying linen and stood ranged in line before the porch.

‘Here they are, my Lady,’ said their mother, proudly reviewing her family. ‘This is Melenda, who’s as good as gold already, and can be trusted with Polly. This is Sam. Hold up your head, Sam. It would do your Ladyship good to hear that boy read. And this is Claude. He’s like his brother Joe and his sister Polly. They all favour their father. In outward looks only, I hope and pray.’

Lady Mildred remarked how she kept recurring to her husband, whose memory she so much detested. It was as if he was always in her mind.

‘Hester,’ she said, ‘do you alone provide for all these children? Is there nobody to help you?’

‘Nobody,’ she replied. ‘It’s terrible hard work, to be sure; and sometimes I wake in the night and think I must break down. And then we shall all have to go to the Union; you can see it from the back of the house, and me and them will be parted.’

'Five mouths to be fed. It must take a great deal of washing to find food for so many.'

'Yes, my Lady. But there, I don't mind hard work. There's worse trouble than that for me to be afraid of—worse than hunger even for the little ones, that I dread day and night.'

'Hester,' said Lady Mildred, who still had the youngest in her arms, 'let me help you. Let me take one of the children off your hands. Lend me this little one.'

'Lend you my Polly?'

'Lend her to me, Hester. You can trust her to me. I am not a stranger to you. Let me take the child.'

The mother snatched the little girl out of her visitor's arms.

'Part with my flesh and blood?' she cried jealously. 'Give you my Polly?'

'If you think it would be for her good.'

The woman hugged the child and pressed it closer to her heart, and shook her head. But the tears came into her eyes.

'There is something on your mind, Hester,' Lady Mildred persisted. 'No; do not think that I want to know what it is. There is something you remember and something you dread. When you speak of your dead husband you look about you as if you feared he might be standing at your garden gate. Poor Hester! You must have had an unhappy life.'

'An unhappy life—yes.'

'He is dead and past our blame of it,' said Lady Mildred.

'Yet something survives. The memory——'

'The memory of it,' Hester repeated. 'The shame of it, for me and for the children.'

'If you let me have the child I will bring her up in ignorance. She shall have no knowledge of the memory.'

'Do you want to make her my young lady's maid?'

'No. She shall be brought up with my daughter—her companion; she shall be educated with her. I will provide for her. As for separation from you——' Lady Mildred remembered that if she was to bring up the child as a young lady, Sam and Melenda and Claude might not, in the course of time, be quite desirable companions—'as for separation, you shall know always how she is going on; when she grows up you shall see her again if you wish it; she shall be told about her parentage nothing more than you please to tell her. Think! You will part from the child, but it will be for her happiness, and one less to work for.'

'Oh, my Polly!' cried the mother. 'As if I could think it a trouble to work for your dear little mouth.'

'Think of it, Hester. Take a week, a month, to consider.'

To Lady Mildred's astonishment Hester decided on the spot.

'You shall have her, my Lady. Oh, to save them from what I dread day and night, I would part with them all. Take her—take her. To save her I would consent never to meet her again till we meet in heaven. Yet—oh, let me keep her just one night—my pretty darling! To hold her in my arms one night longer.'

'Oh, Hester!' said Lady Mildred, moved to tears. 'I will be like a mother to her. She shall never be unhappy if I can help it. And as for you and yours, whatever happens you will have a friend in me and mine.'

'Oh, I know—I know. But promise me one thing, my Lady. Let the child never learn, whatever happens, unless I tell her—only my boy Joe knows—that my name is only my maiden name; else she'll want to know her father's name. If when she grows up she asks about her mother, tell her that her mother was an honest woman. If she asks about her father, say that he is dead and buried long ago. There are five of them. One of them knows the secret already, but he keeps it close; perhaps the three left with me will find it out, but not Polly—not little Polly—which-is-Marla. God knows I'd never part with her—never—except for that one thing, so long as I'd a finger left to work with.'

'She shall be happy,' said Lady Mildred, 'if I can make her happy. And you shall see her again. Somehow you shall see her. You shall not altogether lose her.'

In this way little Polly—which-is-Marla disappeared from Hackney Marsh, and became Valentine or Violet, I know not which—adopted daughter of Lady Mildred Eldridge, and therefore granddaughter of the Earl of Haslemere, Knight of the Garter, and daughter of the late Sir Lancelot Eldridge, Bart., M.P., F.S.A. This was certainly very great promotion, and, if one may say so of a young lady of this tender age, as yet wholly undeserved.

'Have I done well, Bertha?' asked Lady Mildred, over the two cribs in which, side by side, the two children were sleeping. Lady Mildred was a woman with many ideas, and Miss Bertha Colquhoun was the friend of her girlhood to whom she communicated them.

'They are curiously alike,' said Bertha; 'one might almost take them for twin sisters. As for your doing a wise thing, my dear Mildred, Time, the only infallible prophet, will disclose when

the hour comes. I shall not give my decision till I hear his opinion. As for your doing an interesting thing, that is undoubted. Tell me, by the way, which is little Trix? I haven't seen her since she was in long clothes; and which is the little washerwoman of Hackney Marsh!

'Why, nobody knows except myself and my solicitor. I was obliged to tell him. I have changed nurses, and managed so carefully that nobody can so much as guess. The child with the light blue ribbon round its neck is Valentine; the other is Violet. For both of them and for all the world Beatrice is lost, as well as Polly, until October 15, 1885, when Beatrice will come of age.'

'Oh!' said Bertha, disappointed at not being taken into the secret; 'then I must wait like all the world, I suppose. But oh, my dear! Poor little Polly-which-is-Marla! Poor child, when she learns the truth!'

PART II.

THE STROKE OF FATE.

FOR eight years longer those strong arms worked without rest or pause over the wash-tub. Time, who possesses an apparently double movement, like a planet, and goes round and about among us while we go straight on, frequently remarked the unchangeable character of this good woman's life, for whom none of his seasons produced either joy or pain, except so far as they brought good or bad drying days. The lines were always up except in rainy weather, and they were always laden, for eight years, during which Mrs. Monument never flagged and never felt weary. In eight years Joe passed from a 'prentice to a workman: at the age of nineteen, like most of his fellows, he took a wife, herself seventeen; by the age of twenty-four he had five children; in eight years Sam advanced from seven to fifteen and became a pupil teacher, being resolved to achieve the position of Board School master. Claude was thirteen, Melenda was eleven, and Polly, of whom from time to time the mother heard the best accounts, was with her sister Valentine, or Violet, ten years of age.

Now, after eight years, Fate suddenly interposed, acting in that decisive manner by which she has always commanded so much respect, and even fear. It is, in fact, the Oriental style, in

which there is no hearing of a case, or pleading, or argument, or jury, or evidence, or court of appeal, or anything at all but the Caliph, the successor to the Prophet—may his soul have peace!—who knows everything, and orders everything, and lo! it is done, whether it be the lopping of a head or the extermination of a family, as happened to the Barmecides, or the elevation of a beggar in rags to a purple robe and a seat on a white ass and the post of grand vizier, as happened to Mordecai. In this case, as usual, the decree of Fate was final and irresistible. Mrs. Monument began to go blind. First, she became conscious of a curious dimness of vision, whereby the outlines of things were blurred; next she found that this dimness grew upon her, and finally, after the most dreadful apprehensions for the future, she sat down and folded her hands, and made Sam write a letter to Lady Mildred. She had now gone so blind that she could no longer see anything but ‘men like trees walking’; she would very soon cease to see them at all; then she would get to the end of her money; then, what would happen to the children?

When Lady Mildred came, in response to this letter, she was received, so to speak, by a boy who sat in the porch reading. As for the garden, it looked forlorn without the linen: the posts were there, and the lines, but there was no linen, though a most beautiful drying breeze was blowing over the Marsh from the north-east, and there was a warm sun in the sky. Stranger still, there was no smell or steam of soap-suds in the house, and the stricken worker sat in the inner room, hands crossed, in the patient expectant attitude of the blind.

The boy rose and pulled off his hat. Lady Mildred by this time had quite forgotten the child who, at five years of age, had the air and appearance of the descendant of fifty dukes. His face, however, had altered little; it was now a sharp and rather thin face, marked with a strange refinement and delicacy of outline. We do not generally associate such a face with a laundry. We are wrong, of course; because in every city, court, and on every village green, and wherever humans do congregate, there will always be found some child or children with the face of refinement and sweetness, not in the least like the rough and plain faces round them. A scientific person, I believe, would call them ‘sports,’ playfully implying that Nature must have her little distractions, and cannot abide for ever to be trammelled with law and rule. Perhaps, however, the scientific person would be wrong, and there may be nothing in man which is not hereditary,

down to the cut of a nostril, the outline of a cheek, or the curve of a lip. If Claude's ancestors in the male line were known, for instance, we might trace every feature the boy possessed to some grandfather or great-grandmother. As for his mother's family, it is very well known indeed, and it is a most ancient and a highly honourable house, seeing that every man in it, from father to son, has, from time immemorial, worn the smock-frock or leather jerkin, driven the plough, fed the pigs, sowed and reaped, and sowed again, and has presently shut his eyes and been laid under a little mound of grass in the acre of the Lord. And as for distinction, why the sons of this House fought at Senlac, where they got defeated, after unheard-of bravery, and at Cressy and Agincourt and Bosworth Field, and at Blenheim, and at Waterloo and Alma. Claude has every reason to be proud of his ancestors by his mother's side. But he did not get his face from any of them, because their faces, though scrupulously honest and sometimes clean, were never either refined or delicate.

'Please, ma'am, my name is Claude,' said the boy, conscious that his name was much finer than Sam's; and indeed it is a very beautiful name, and many a city knight has to put up with one much inferior.

'Claude—yes—I remember you now.' Lady Mildred remembered the story of his baptism—was he really named after Claude Duval? 'Let me look at you, boy! You are like your sister—Polly. Does your mother tell you about Polly—which-is-Marla?'

'Oh yes. A fine lady came and took Polly away. Some day we are to see her again, when she comes home for good. She won't be proud, mother says.'

Then Lady Mildred left him and went to see her old nurse. She observed, however, that the boy sat down again and buried his face in his book. 'You poor soul!' she said. 'Tell me all about yourself, and why didn't you send for me before? And what does the doctor say?'

Presently, after the first outpourings concerning the darkened eyes—'And now,' said Lady Mildred, 'about your children. Is Joe doing well? And has he turned out quite as stupid as you hoped?'

'Joe's a good workman, and he's in good work at Tottenham with a plumber and house decorator. He would marry at nineteen, like all the rest of them, and now there's five innocent babies, and she two years younger than himself. But he's a good son always, though he can't help no one but himself.'

‘And Sam?’

‘He’s a pupil teacher and gets on wonderful. There never was a boy like Sam for getting on. He’s made up his mind to rise in the world, and rise he will. Says he shall be master of a Board School before he’s satisfied. Think of that for my Sam.’

‘Good boy! And then comes Claude, the little fellow outside in the porch.’

The mother shook her head.

‘I don’t know what will come to the boy, nor what trade he will take to. For he thinks about nothing but books and reading. Sam reads, too; but then Sam only reads what he wants, and what will be useful to him. Claude reads everything. Oh, dear—dear! his father was just the same. Always for ever with a book in his hand.’

‘Boys who read,’ said Lady Mildred, ‘often come to great honour. And what about Melenda?’

‘She’s at school yet. But she gives me a deal of trouble, my Lady. I want to get her into good service, in a lady’s house. But she won’t go. She says all the girls at school are going to be free and independent, and earn their own living by themselves, and so will she. What do they know about it? Give me a good dinner every day, I tell her. That’s the first thing. But the girls now-a-days are all for freedom even if they starve with it. There, my Lady, that’s enough about the children. Tell me how my Polly grows, and if she’s a good girl, and pretty behaved.’

It certainly was a very good thing for the Monument family that it found a friend in Lady Mildred at this juncture when, if it had not been for her, the subsequent history of the family would have belonged to the simple annals of the Workhouse. As it was, the sympathy of Lady Mildred proved of a very practical kind. First it procured for Mrs. Monument a cottage in an almshouse in the Tottenham Road, where she was near her eldest son Joe, and substantial help besides, so that she would be looked after and ‘done’ for; and, as for Sam, it provided for that boy—though he never knew the fact—the means of continuing his course of study and enabled him first to become a monitor with five shillings a week and next a pupil-teacher with sixteen shillings a week, and then to go to a college, and finally to get a place as assistant teacher on ninety pounds a year with a five-pound rise. And as for Melenda, it kept her at school and found her in food and clothes until she refused to stay any more. And

as for Claude, I suppose the boy's pretty delicate face and intelligent eyes had something to do with Lady Mildred's kindness to the boy; but she always said it was because she found him a natural lover of learning and devourer of books. At all events, she called him one day and held a very serious conversation with him.

First she asked him what he should like to be.

'I should like,' the boy replied, reddening, 'to go into a bookseller's shop. There's one in the Victoria Park Road, full of old books, where they want a boy.'

'You would not be allowed to read the books. You would only sweep out the shop, put up the shutters, and run on errands.'

The boy's face fell. To sit among books seemed to him the height of happiness. But to sit among books and not be allowed to read them, that would be a fate worse than that of Tantalus.

'You should desire to get on, Claude. The love of reading may help you if you have the other qualities for success. Have you thought of anything else?'

No; he had no other ambitions.

'Now listen. Boys who read and are industrious sometimes get on very well. I fear it may be too late for you to do much, but you can try if you are brave.'

What was he to try? Claude looked at her with great eyes of wonder. 'I will give you a good education. I will take you away from this place and have you taught as much as you can learn. You shall be educated up to your capacity, whatever that may be.' Claude felt himself, as to capacity, like unto the Great Tun of Heidelberg. His colour came and went; his heart beat and he choked. What was this great happiness that was coming to him? 'When I learn that you have gone far enough, we will consider what you can do for your living. And remember'—she lifted an admonitory finger—'never pretend to be what you are not. You are the son of a working man and a working woman, though you will wear good broadcloth and go to school with boys who may pretend to look down upon you.' Claude wondered what she meant. 'As for your mother, you will go to see her whenever you can, and you will not neglect your brothers and your sister. Your future will depend entirely upon your industry and upon your ability. I think you will show ability, at least. If you do, remember that every avenue to success is open to you. That you will not understand at first. Say it to yourself until

you do understand it. Say it when you read of any great man. Never forget it. Though you are a poor lad, you may hope for everything and dare everything. But you must not be afraid to work and to wait; you must not be afraid of fighting or of speaking out. Above all things, work. Do you understand, Claude?’

The boy’s heart glowed within him. But he could not answer. His tongue refused to move. He was frightened as well as dazzled at the prospect before him.

‘Will you do your best, Claude?’ Lady Mildred asked in a kinder voice.

‘Oh! yes, yes,’ said Claude, bursting into tears.

‘Your best, my boy. Your hardest and your best. You will either see me or hear from me often. I shall always know exactly what you are doing and how you are getting on. Oh! child, you are too young, yet, and too ignorant, to know what a magnificent chance you are going to have. I pray that you may not throw it away. If you do, the mud into which you fall will be Malebolge itself compared with the mud out of which you have been taken.’

The boy understood little of these words except the great fact that he was going to learn unheard-of things; that he was no longer to wander on the Hackney Marsh, dreaming, but he was to work, something as his brother Sam was working, but with other aims, and, as he vaguely understood, with wider aims. He was to work, to fight, to wait, and to hope. In course of time success would be his. I do not know what were his ideas of success. A boy cannot frame or map out for himself a career; but he can feel that something is to be tried for and something won, and he can imagine for himself some of the glorious sensations of victory. Besides, the boy who accustoms himself to think of the world as something to be conquered, and of himself as a soldier of the future, has already won half the battle. For him there will be no false modesty. When the time comes, he will step into the front rank as one whose place is there, and that by divine right itself.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

AT NINE O'CLOCK.

THERE are many delightful and desirable rooms in London; the Pilgrim who is in Society is continually halting on his way to rest and refresh in these Houses Beautiful. But there can be no more pleasant place than that room in Lady Mildred's town house which the girls had made their own. It was on the ground floor; two windows looked through the foliage of lime, laburnum, and lilac, upon the Park, though with the road between; it had at one end a glass door opening upon a conservatory; it was always filled with the fragrance of flowers; and here the girls kept their own things—their very own—which they prized the most. Valentine had here her favourite piano, with her songs and music; the walls were hung with Violet's pictures, and there were portfolios filled with her sketches; there were cabinets full of treasures collected in their wanderings—things pretty, things ugly, things quaint, things precious, things worthless—memories of Egypt, Greece, Italy, and France and Germany—wherever the English girl is allowed to wander. It is not yet, but very soon it will become, the fashion for her to visit the States and Canada, the isles of the Pacific, Australia, India, and far Cathay. Therefore the young ladies had nothing from these countries.

About seven o'clock on an evening early in July of the year 1885 the two girls were sitting together in this room, as was not uncommon with them. But it was their wont to be quiet, calm, and restful, as behoves young ladies who believe that life is always to be a long-continued and monotonous happiness in the midst of pretty things and soft cushions. On this occasion, however, they were greatly agitated. One of them, Valentine, was standing; the other, Violet, was sitting at the table. In her hand she held a pencil, and she was rapidly drawing figures on a sheet of paper.

They were about the same age, and that a youthful age; they were dressed exactly alike—they always dressed exactly alike—and for the evening. If a masculine pen may be permitted to indicate the outlines of their dress, leaving details to be filled up by the imagination of experience, they wore a dainty confection of

pale blue silk called, I think, *surat*, which fell in long folds from the waist, and was caught up at one side showing a lace petticoat, which is a pretty old fashion come back again. The throat was a little open but not much, with folds of lace about it, and there was an arrangement of ribbons and loops about the waist. They were dressed well, in fact, yet with the appearance of simplicity. Their hair was of the light brown hue which is so much beloved by the English youth. Violet's was full of curls and curves and twists, which caught the light and scattered it about as a little waterfall in a mountain brook breaks and scatters the sunshine. Valentine's hair was slightly darker in shade, not curly, but with a wave in it, and in her hair the sunshine lay and rested. They dressed their hair in the same fashion, and that not a common fashion; for it was parted at the side instead of in the middle—or as hairdressers, ignorant of Euclid, say, in the centre; it is a pretty fashion if there is a pretty face for the hair to encircle, otherwise the commoner methods are preferable. Their eyes were blue in colour, but not quite the same shade of blue; for Valentine's were certainly darker than Violet's, and like the hair, they absorbed the light which Violet's received and reflected: in other words, they were deeper and graver eyes. I would not for a moment suggest that they were more beautiful; that is matter for the jealousy of a lover, and nowhere are comparisons more odious than those concerning beauty. Argument on such a subject is purely vexatious and barren, and wastes the time which should be spent in thankful hymns for the precious gift of loveliness. Always those eyes are the most beautiful which belong to the woman one loves at any moment; and, until he meets his fate, a well-regulated young man should always be in love with somebody. The girls' faces were of the oval type, but, which is a most important distinction, of the shorter oval. The longer oval, in fact, is apt to degenerate into narrowness, with perhaps the expression of a bird of prey; while the shorter form allows of strength to the chin and breadth to the forehead and amplitude to the cheek. Venus should have an ample cheek as well as a smiling mouth and kindly gracious eyes. There may be less capacity for philosophy, but there is more for mathematics, music, and the finer feelings in the shorter than in the longer oval. A prolonged residence at Newnham would be necessary in order to continue this delightful investigation to its legitimate end. And one need not here discuss questions on which even novelists, who are the only true philosophers of modern times, and

ought to be the only statesmen, might disagree; besides, these girls were neither philosophers nor mathematicians. They were only girls who had been carefully educated at home, and knew a great many accomplishments and arts, had curiously pretty customs and pleasing manners, and practised, without knowing it, the most charming graces. But they knew no political economy, and they were not brought up to consider themselves bound to consider or to solve any social questions at all.

The girls were about the same height—that is to say, they were fairly tall; their carriage and bearing were alike; they looked like sisters, and were taken by strangers for twin sisters. There were, however, certain marked differences between them not immediately apparent which the stranger presently observed. Thus, Valentine was somewhat larger in person than Violet; and as to their voices, Valentine's was rich and full, Violet's was low and sweet. And as to their tastes, Valentine was a musician and a singer, while her sister painted with no mean skill, and drew, if not quite so well as Mr. Du Maurier, yet well enough to delight her friends and to please herself. Yet, which is a very curious thing and only to be accounted for by the fact that everybody knew they were not really sisters, it was universally agreed by all their friends that no one could possibly mistake them for sisters. One of them—there never was any concealment of this fact—was the only child of the late Sir Lancelot Eldridge, Baronet and Member for the county, who would probably have got into the Cabinet had his party returned to power in time. But they did not, and he was cut off at sixty-five, which is, for a statesman, early manhood, almost the first flush of spring promise. He left a quite young widow, Lady Mildred, daughter of the Earl of Haslemere, to take care of his infant daughter. The other girl—there was never any concealment of this fact either—was nothing in the world but the daughter of a mechanical person of the baser sort, a mere working man. She had been adopted by Lady Mildred, no one knew why, and was brought up with her own child. Her true name, though this was not generally known, was Marla, and she had been formerly known in her own rank of life as Polly, for short. One of them, therefore, was a very considerable heiress, and most desirable in point of family connections; the other had nothing at all, and her connections were presumably most undesirable.

‘No one will maintain,’ said the World, ‘that the daughter of a working man and the daughter of a gentleman can ever stand

upon the same level. Education can refine, but it cannot change base metal into gold.'

Yes. Unfortunately there was a complication. No one, not even the girls themselves, knew which of the two was the heiress and which the simple working-man's daughter.

'This,' said the World, 'is wicked. Lady Mildred will not speak and no one knows, and there are hundreds of men only waiting to know which is which. Is it right to ignore natural distinctions? Not to know; and it ought to be such a simple thing; and yet it is not possible to tell, and it disturbs all one's ideas. Why the Eldridges have always been remarkable for the beauty of their girls. But these girls are both beautiful. And of course one ought to read old descent in a face. But here both the faces might show long descent. What man would dare to face so terrible an uncertainty? Why he might be marrying into the most dreadful family possible. Was it right, could it be right, of Lady Mildred to take a girl out of the gutter and pretend that she is a lady?'

There was once a nymph of surpassing loveliness who offered every one of her suitors a double acrostic, with an alternative: either they guessed it quite correctly without the aid of any dictionary, or if they failed in any one of the lights—it was a frightfully hard acrostic, which wanted both dictionary and encyclopædia and a complete acquaintance with the whole field of classical literature—that suitor was instantly decapitated, and so made way for another. If, on the other hand, he succeeded, this murderous young person bestowed upon him her blood-stained hand. In point of fact, though history passes it over, only one young man ever offered himself. He was the Prize Acrostic Guesser—the champion. They gave him the thing, in neat hendecasyllabics, and while he was reading it they proceeded to erect the scaffold. But in the confusion and excitement which always attends a coming execution he meanly ran away. In the end this princess died unmarried. There was also another young lady, strong and staying as to wind and limb, who offered to run races with her suitors, on the same terms of death or victory. But Love's Nemesis came upon her too, for no one ever proposed to run with her on those terms, and she presently grew middle-aged and fat, and lamented the days of her beauty and her arrogance, and said that running races was unladylike and ought to have been discouraged long since, and it was wrong of her parents to encourage her. But it was too late, and now she leadeth

apes by a chain. Lady Mildred presented herself and her two girls before society when they were twenty years of age, with a conundrum bearing much the same consequences.

She said, in fact, to the whole of the English youth, 'Young gentlemen, here are two charming girls. They are natural, fresh, and innocent. I have kept them in the country for twenty years, so that they are healthy both in body and in mind. They are as pretty as most girls; they are accomplished; they are frank and they are good-natured; they are amiable, they are even clever. One is my daughter and the other is not; one is an heiress and the other is not. Fall in love, therefore, if you dare. Offer your hands if you dare. You may win a fortune or draw a blank. You may be grandson-in-law to an earl and son-in-law to a baronet, or you may find yourself surrounded by a troop of cousins with paper caps, aprons, bags of tools, sewing-machines, and with the manners which generally accompany those emblems of toil. Is love worth such a risk?'

Apparently it is not in this cold and calculating age. The girls had gone through their first season, and not one man as yet had ventured. This did not disturb them in the least, for they were ignorant of Lady Mildred's conundrum, and their thoughts were not bent on matrimony.

There was not wanting plenty of curiosity. There are always inquisitive persons whose imaginations are fired with every mystery, and can never rest until they know all about it. Some of these tried questioning Lady Mildred, and were coldly snubbed; some even tried the girls, who froze directly the subject was mentioned. But they learned experience, and presently grew wary and recognised the regulation smile of sympathy and the little laugh of apology with which the mystery was always approached. Some examined the various extant portraits of Sir Lancelot—that at eight years of age, that at twenty, that at forty, and that at sixty—and then furtively compared them with the two girls and sucked thereout no profit to themselves, but only more uncertainty; and others gazed upon Lady Mildred and watched her gestures, her carriage, her little distinctive mannerisms, if she haply had any, and then watched the girls, looking for some little trait in one of them—a turn of the head, a momentary emotion of the face, which might reveal the secret. There were hundreds of these indications. Unfortunately they were as remarkable in one of the girls as in the other. A mother, again, is generally found to show more tenderness towards her own child

than to another, but Lady Mildred was tenderness itself towards both the girls; not the least difference could be observed in her manner towards either. Then there is the voice; but here specialists—that is to say, those who remembered Sir Lancelot—differed, because there were some who recognised in Valentine and some in Violet the tones of the late baronet's voice exactly reproduced.

And now the world was waiting. In three months Lady Mildred's daughter would be of age; perhaps the other one as well; but nobody cared about that. It would be impossible then to conceal the thing any longer. The heiress must receive her inheritance; the truth would be known; the parentage of the workman's daughter stand revealed; and the young men could come forward.

'Val,' said one of the girls impatiently, 'I really do believe that the evening of this day will never come.'

'It is much longer than the very longest day of all the year, Violet; my dear, a longer day was never created,' Valentine replied. 'He belongs to both of us, absolutely and impartially, does he not?'

'That is agreed,' Violet replied gravely. 'He is our brother—brother to both of us.'

'If we are to be proud of him,' Valentine went on, 'we are to be proud together. He is our own property—the property of both. If we are to be ashamed of him, we will be ashamed together.'

'Ashamed of him,' Violet repeated. 'I suppose he will be like this.' She had sketched a workman with a bag of tools in his hand, and a paper cap and an apron—a good-looking young workman. 'This is the best chance for us, Val dear. But yet I don't see even in this case that we can be reasonably proud of him, can we?'

'Well,' said Valentine, examining the sketch, 'you have made him look respectable. Labour has its dignity. Can't we be proud of an intelligent working man?'

'Or he may be like this.' She took up another sketch showing the conventional *Ælf* and *'Arry* out for a holiday, arm in arm, roaring and shouting—they are really very rare, these two, though they certainly can be found. 'Or like this'; she showed a young fellow leaning in drunken pose against a lamp-post; 'Or—' here she showed a dreadful, smug young man with fat cheeks and curly whiskers, a frock coat and baggy trousers, and a smile—one

of those young men who read scientific books, live on temperance principles, and are virtuous—all with ostentation.

‘Don’t, Violet,’ said her sister. ‘Oh, I am sure we shall not be ashamed of him. Mama would not have asked him to come here if he were like this—or this. But possibly he is a working man—what else can he be? We are only the daughter of one!’

‘Perhaps,’ said Violet, ‘he may know which of us is his sister by some likeness to his father or his mother or himself.’

‘Or perhaps he may remember us. We were only two when we were taken from our—other mother; and he is three or four years older; he may remember his little sister.’

‘No: not after twenty years. But there may be a something—a family squint—but our eyes are straight; some people have hereditary teeth which stick out—but ours don’t; or thick lips—but ours are not thick; or great ears which stick up—but yours are small and lie flat, and so do mine. Oh! there must be something, if it is only a disposition to drink.’

‘And then there would be no secret to tell us on the fifteenth of October. If there is anything, Vi, let us keep it to ourselves.’

‘I know what I should like to say.’ Violet sprang to her feet. ‘I should like to say: Brother—this is Miss Beatrice Eldridge—I am your sister. My name is Polly—Polly-which-is-Marla.’ For they had heard so much of the family history.

‘And I,’ said Valentine, ‘should tell him that you are quite mistaken, because I have always been convinced in my own mind that I am Polly.’

‘There are moments,’ said Violet reflectively, ‘when I feel unheard-of possible depths.’

‘And there are times,’ said Valentine, ‘when I feel inconceivable basenesses.’

‘Of course, the lower classes do feel depths.’

‘Of course, my unworthy thoughts are my inheritance.’

‘Then both of us,’ said Violet, ‘must call him brother.’

‘And he must call us both sister.’

‘The two together only make one sister. Then I suppose we must let him call us by our Christian name. Fancy a carpenter in an apron addressing you as Valentine! Oh! I shall box his ears.’

‘Violet’—Valentine dropped her voice and blushed at the thought of the thing. ‘Brothers—kiss their sisters. It will be dreadful if——’

‘No,’ said Violet, firmly. ‘Certainly not. No carpenter shall ever kiss me.’

'Sooner or later we shall learn the truth. Till then,' said Valentine, 'the question must not even be raised. Besides, if one hasn't seen one's brother for twenty years, one cannot very well be expected to—oh! Violet, everybody knows the story of the beggar who became a princess, but nobody knows the story of the princess who became a beggar, and put on rags and wandered about with poor people. Do you think she was ever happy, dear?'

'No,' said Violet, shuddering, 'she was always miserable, and she died young, and of a broken heart.'

'I don't know. Perhaps she was a great joy to the poor people, and was able to do all kinds of things for them. I think I could put on the rags, Violet dear.'

'You never shall. You in rags!' Violet shuddered again. 'But they might be picturesque. You shall put them on, Val dear, and sit to me in them, and I will paint you so, and send the picture, if they will have it, to the Grosvenor.'

'Bertha, stay here this evening. I want you to assist at a Family Function which is to take place at nine o'clock.'

This was in another room—Lady Mildred's drawing-room—and there were present Lady Mildred herself and Miss Bertha Colquhoun, her old friend. Twenty years had passed over their heads. The former had never married again—the latter had never married at all; as regards the ravages of time, Lady Mildred was no longer young, but she was still comely, and Bertha was of like age, but less comely, because widows wear better than spinsters. It would be unkind to say more.

'What is it, Mildred?'

'I am going, this evening, at length, to make the girls acquainted with their——'

'At last! Oh, Mildred—and you have asked me to learn the truth with them. It is kind of you.'

'Acquainted with—their brother.'

'Oh! But—pardon me, Mildred—is that necessary? Their brother must be, I suppose, quite a common man. Is it well to pain the poor girls with such kinds of associations? I thought they—she—had been quite separated from the family.'

'You shall answer the questions for yourself at nine o'clock, Bertha. Meantime, remember that it wants little more than three months to the time when my child must learn the truth, because she will attain her twenty-first birthday.'

'But why not wait to tell them?'

'Both girls know the story of Polly, but to-day they heard for the first time that there is a brother, and that they are to meet him this evening.'

'Poor girls!'

'They are now preparing themselves, I believe, for the reception of a working man.'

'Poor dear girls!'

'And they are encouraging each other to receive him kindly. Before the truth is known to them, you see, they will have time to become fully acquainted with the whole of the other family.'

'Poor Polly! Oh! Mildred, how could you?'

'Why do you pity Polly? She is as well bred as Beatrice: she is as beautiful. I shall not unmake the gentle breeding, though I take away the gentle birth.'

'Still—poor Polly! Will she take her own name?'

'I do not see the necessity. She may just as well remain Valentine—or Violet Eldridge.'

'I suppose the brother will come here straight from the public house, pipe and all?'

'Perhaps.'

'No doubt he will. Poor girls! It is dreadful for them. After all these years of culture—of course, for one it will be only a little excitement which will pass in three or four months, and then she will be able to reflect that she knew all along that she was Beatrice. But as for the other—I repeat, Mildred, poor Polly! However, you have forgotten one thing.'

'What is that?'

'Why in introducing their brother you will betray the secret, because the girls will find out the truth—everybody will find it out—from his likeness to one of them. So I shall be the first to learn the secret after all.'

The four ladies dined together, but it was a silent banquet. The girls, for their part, said nothing at all, but looked at each other and at the clock. At half-past eight they adjourned to the drawing-room. The brother was to be introduced at nine. The girls, as the clock drew nearer to the hour, clasped each other by the hand while Lady Mildred and Bertha fell into silence or only exchanged a word at intervals. And oh! how slowly moved the minutes!

At nine in the evenings of early July it is not dark, but only

a little overshadowed, and there is quite light enough left to discern faces, which is all that is necessary for conversation. You may talk in the dark, but, as Charles Lamb once remarked, it is inconvenient having to feel your companion's face for the responsive smile. As the clock struck the hour the door was thrown open.

'Mr. Claude Monument!'

The girls caught each other and gasped. Lady Mildred rose. In the door stood a young man who looked about him with troubled eyes.

'Good Heavens!' Bertha murmured, but I think everybody heard her. 'The creature is a gentleman!'

Yes. He had on the outward garb of a gentleman, and he carried himself with the outward bearing of a gentleman. It was a rude thing for Bertha to say, but her mind was full of working men and pipes and aprons and the smell of beer, and she was surprised into rudeness, and she hoped that nobody would notice it. Now, there certainly was never yet in any history or in any country a carpenter or a smith or a working man of any kind who ever had a dress coat to put on unless it was to go out as a waiter in the evening. Could the young man be a waiter?

'My children,' said Lady Mildred, taking the young man by the arm, 'here is your brother; Claude, this is your sister, Valentine and Violet.'

'Good Heavens!' cried Bertha for the second time, as she pressed forward and peered curiously into his face. 'Why, the man is just like both of them!'

CHAPTER II.

WHICH IS MY SISTER?

LADY MILDRED touched Bertha on the arm, and they left the three together.

'Which of you,' asked Claude, looking from one to the other, 'which of you is my sister?'

The girls held each a hand and gazed into his face with wondering eyes, which met eyes of equal wonder. Neither of them answered, but all those wondering eyes softened and became humid. Is it a small thing, think you, for two girls to be unexpectedly presented with a grown-up brother? And that brother so desirable in outward looks? Is it a small thing for a

young man, especially a young man who has been lifted from the lower to the higher levels, to be presented with a sister who has been similarly transplanted, and to outward seeming has proved equal to the change? To be sure he had already a sister, but she was Melenda, and two brothers, but one was Joe and one was Sam.

Claude saw before him two girls, beautiful exceedingly and strangely alike each other; Nature, as we have already heard, having been so good as to lend a most generous assistance to Lady Mildred. He thought of Melenda. Good heavens! if one of these was his own sister and the other Lady Mildred's daughter—and the features of both in the soft summer twilight had the same delicacy, their eyes the same purity, their lips the same sweetness—how could one of these girls be his own sister, and the sister of Melenda? The girls, for their part, saw a young man with straight and regular features, broad forehead, resolute lips, and steady, serious eyes—a young man, somewhat slight in figure, but well shaped and of grave expression—and they were overwhelmed. This was their brother, like one of themselves they thought, the child of a London working man. By what arts had he been transformed into a gentleman?

'Which of you,' he repeated, 'is my sister?'

'We do not know, Claude,' said Violet, thinking guiltily of her sketches.

He turned to the other girl.

'We do not know,' Valentine repeated.

'You do not know? Lady Mildred told me yesterday that she would give me a sister.'

'We do not know,' said Violet, for the third time; 'we thought that perhaps you would recognise your sister, or might know her by some likeness to—your father, for instance.'

'I do not remember my father. He has been dead a great many years. I have forgotten my sister entirely, and I was never told that Lady Mildred had taken her.'

'Claude,' said Valentine, 'we must both be your sisters.'

'I will tell you,' said Violet, 'Polly's history brought down to this very day. Listen. She was found by Lady Mildred nineteen years ago, and was taken from her playground, which was also the drying yard, for her mother was a washerwoman. I never see linen hanging out to dry without thinking of that day. She was playing hide and seek all by herself among the wet sheets, no doubt catching a dreadful cold, when she was found and carried away. She was a pretty child, and curiously like little Beatrice. Well,

she was educated with Beatrice, and no difference at all was made between them, and they were called Valentine and Violet, but they knew all along that one was Beatrice and the other was Polly. They had the same masters, they learned the same things, and had the same friends. And now we are grown up and have come out, and people when they don't know the story—but they are very few—think us sisters, and say there is no doubt about our descent from the illustrious house of Eldridge. It would be for some girls awkward to explain, but we are used to it, and now point out without any confusion that one of us is Beatrice Eldridge and the other is Polly—what is the name, Claude? I did not quite catch your name, which we have never been told.'

'Monument.'

'Monument.' Violet considered the name for a moment. 'Monument. It might have been worse. Monument. Fancy being a Monument! Little Trix has grown into tall Beatrice—we are both exactly the same height. Little Polly has also grown into big Polly, which is short for Marla, her real name—we know that part of the family history too.' Claude thought that he could perceive the least possible vein of bitterness under this bright talk, but then he was naturally sensitive about his reception. 'Don't forget, Claude,' she added, 'that we think quite as much about Beatrice as about Polly. Do we not, Val?'

'Quite as much,' replied Valentine, gravely; 'we must not be ashamed of Beatrice because she has not the same picturesqueness of birth as her sister. Please, Claude, get into the habit of remembering that Violet is really Beatrice, and that I am your very own sister. I am sure of it. Why, I actually remember playing about among the clothes. I think—but I am not quite sure—that I remember the cold I caught.'

'She is quite wrong, Claude,' Violet interposed. 'When I shut my eyes I can really see the wet sheets, and if you want any further proof you will very soon find yourself looking to Valentine for everything which requires the instinctive impulse of generosity.'

'Oh! Violet!'

'Is it possible? You do not know?' he repeated.

'We do not know,' they assured him together, and for the fourth time.

'Then what are we to do?'

The girls looked at each other and shook their heads. What were they to do? The situation was embarrassing, but it was what they expected.

'We had made up our minds before you came what we were going to do. You will have to treat us as if we were both your sisters, until you find out which of us it is, and after that we will consider the position again. But,' said Violet, clasping her hands, 'oh! the joy and comfort of having a brother so promising as you! My dearest Val, think how very, very few brotherless girls like you and me ever get such a chance as a full-grown brother given to them, and a brother too—who—looks,' she spoke quite slowly and with a sigh of relief between each word, 'who—looks—as—if—we—should—actually—be proud of him.'

Claude blushed, but it was growing too late to see that lingering note of youth.

'You might have come home from a desert island, Claude, after you had been wrecked and been given up for lost for nineteen years. But then there would have been a sweetheart waiting for you—they always have a sweet——oh! but perhaps there is——'

'No,' said Claude, laughing, 'there is not.'

'I am very glad, because we shall have you all to ourselves. You might have been brought to us when you were a schoolboy, and then you would have tortured and plagued us. You might have been kept back for another ten years, and then we should have been old women. Oh! it is much better as it is. You will try to like us, won't you?'

'Will you try to like me?' Claude replied, 'and not expect too much of me?'

'You will tell us presently'—it was always Violet who continued to talk. She was a little flushed, and her eyes were brighter than usual. 'You will tell us presently,' she said, 'how it is that you have become a—a gentleman.' Then, as if fearing that she might have given pain, she added, 'Because sons of working men do not often look and speak like you.'

'I will tell you presently,' he replied. 'Did you think I should come straight from a workshop?'

'This is what Violet drew,' said Valentine, showing him the sketches; 'we pictured the very worst, you see.'

'I see,' said Claude, laughing. 'But the sketches are delightful. May I take them? Thank you. Well, then, let us sit down, and I will tell you all about it.'

So they sat down, and he, like Æneas, began his moving tale, and they, like two twin Didos, listened. When he mentioned the trade of his father and the calling of his mother, Violet begged him earnestly not to speak of those things if they were painful to him. He declared, however, and it seemed strange to her, that it

was not in the least painful to him to feel that his mother had been a washerwoman. To think of one's own mother earning her bread at a wash-tub!

Claude carried on his narration into his schooldays, where he fought his way to the front and won scholarships and prizes.

'I know now,' he said, 'why Lady Mildred came to see me and why she fired me with ambition. Once she took me to the theatre, and between the acts asked me if I would rather be one of the actors on the stage or the author of the piece or one of the gentlemen in the stalls, because if I wished I could become any one of them. And once she took me into the Park in her carriage and showed me the great people, and asked me if I wished to be one of them, because I could if I wished. And again she took me to a court of justice, and asked me if I would like to be the counsel pleading in the case, or the judge who heard it, because it depended wholly on myself. And then to a church where there was a bishop preaching, and she asked me if I would like to be a bishop. Always as if the highest was within my reach if I chose. So that I never felt as if the accident of obscure birth was going to be an obstacle in my way. And indeed it has not been any hindrance, so far.'

'That was like her,' said Valentine, 'to fill you with noble ambitions.'

'And besides, my mother was no longer a laundress, and I came, no doubt through Lady Mildred's promptings, to think of her courage and steadfast love and the whole life that she gave freely to her children.'

'Yes, Claude,' said Violet meekly.

'It was through Lady Mildred that I learned to love the hard work which was to be my ladder. I owe everything—everything—to her. And now, I owe a sister.' He offered, with a little shyness, a hand to each.

'And what are you now, Claude?'

'I am a barrister of the Inner Temple, newly called, and as yet without a brief or a client; but they will come.'

'He is a barrister, Val—oh!'

'And I am a Fellow of Trinity.'

'Oh! Violet, he is actually a Fellow of Trinity!' They clasped hands of admiration and of joy. Could they have hoped or dreamed of such a thing?

'Now you know all. I am something of a scholar and a good deal of a student. And I have enormous ambitions, of which I will tell you another time if I may.'

'Tell us everything,' said Valentine; 'do not have any half confidences with us. Tell us all about yourself. It is something only to know what a man's ambitions are. Remember we have some right to your confidences. We are your sisters, Claude.'

'You shall have all my confidences. But do not expect too much of me. Do not be disappointed in me. As far as I have gone, it is certainly true that no one could have done much more than I have done. I am *Fabri Filius*, son of a smith, so entered in the college books. The University is open to all the world, but of course everybody understands that if the son of a working man enters he should justify his admission.'

'You have already justified yours, then,' said Valentine. 'Oh! Claude, we are proud of you.'

'But how am I to justify my admission?' asked Violet. 'Because I am also *Fabri Filia*—that is good Latin—the daughter of the smith? Don't shake your head at me, Valentine dear, or I will call you Beatrice at once and for good. You see, Claude, Val and I have double the number of ancestors. For instance, we have four grandfathers instead of two. Two of them used to wear straw round their legs and smock frocks, and they said all day, "Gee—who! a!" The dear old men! And as for the other two, one tied a beautiful blue garter round his leg, and had a gold collar to hang round his neck, and on grand occasions he put a gold coronet on his head; and the other was a baronet, and lived in a great house, and voted solidly with the Conservatives. This wealth of grandfathers naturally makes us proud. But you have no share in two of them, poor boy!'

Claude laughed.

'I have tried to persuade myself,' he said, 'that it makes no difference at all what a man's birth may have been. But of course I don't quite believe it. I am always measuring my own stature with that of my friends, and asking myself if I stand on their level as regards—what constitutes a gentleman. If I do not, forgive me and help me.'

'But you do,' said Valentine; 'of course you do.'

'Any man may make himself a scholar and a Fellow of Trinity, and even a great barrister, but I am not certain whether any man may make himself a gentleman. Do you think that after any kind of intellectual success, even the highest, a man may ever be able to say to himself, "I am a gentleman at last; I have the instincts as well as the training of a gentleman"?''

'You have them already,' said Valentine, confidently; 'one can see them in your face.'

'The family name is Monument,' said Violet quietly.

'Quite so,' Claude replied; 'and the name is associated with memories. Did not Lady Mildred tell you anything about your family?'

'Nothing except my father was a smith and that my own name is Marla or Polly.'

'Now tell us,' said Valentine, 'about the family. Have we any other relations besides yourself, Claude?'

'My dear,' said Violet, 'should we enquire further than is necessary? There must be cousins by hundreds. But go on, Claude.'

'First there is my mother.'

'Oh!' both cried out. Then their other mother was living.

'She is blind, and has ceased to work for many years. She is now in an almshouse.'

'Claude, you cannot suffer her to stay there.'

'She is happier there. Lady Mildred made me promise to let her stay. Do not be ashamed of the almshouse.'

'Poor mother!' said Valentine; 'blind, and in an almshouse.'

'One would much rather have heard,' said Violet, 'that she was the widow of a retired officer and living nicely in a villa at Southsea. But if she is happy—go on, Claude. Is our father living—in another almshouse?'

'No; he is dead,' said Claude gravely. 'We ought to be proud of my father. He was clever in his trade; he was sober and industrious; he was honest and respected: what more can one ask of one's father? Joe remembers him well. It is from Joe that I have heard about my father. He was but a working man, but I am proud of him.'

'We will be proud of him too,' said Valentine, though as yet she saw little room for pride in a father who only possessed the very simple virtues of honesty, industry, and skill. You perceive that she was deplorably ignorant of the world, where we are constantly brought to a standstill and provoked into wrath just by the lack of these very simple qualities.

'Did Polly,' Violet continued, 'have any other brothers and sisters? She hopes on the whole that she did not, because it is impossible they could all be so nice as you, Claude.'

'She had two other brothers and one sister. First there is Joe.'

'My brother Joe. It sounds oddly at first. Joe—Joseph—'

Joe. I think Joseph—no, Joe—is better. We will call him Joe, Val. He is no doubt a working man.'

'He is the eldest and is a locksmith, as his father was before him. He is now six-and-thirty years of age, though he looks older.'

'Is he—does he—go about with that red handkerchief round his throat that we were talking of?'

'Joe is a smith'—Claude evaded the question—'and he works for a builder and decorator. Of course he looks like what he is—a working man.'

'Things are being brought home to us, Val,' said Violet. 'Go on, Claude.'

'He is a good-natured man and he has ten children.'

'Ten children? They are our nephews and nieces. The world,' said Violet, 'is growing wider.'

'He married, like most working men, at nineteen. There is one good point about Joe—he is careful of his mother, whom he never forgets.'

'And after Joe?'

'Then there is Sam, ten years younger. He is the master of a Board School, and is unmarried. He is clever, and has read and has ideas. In fact he has too many ideas, and he holds them perhaps too strongly.'

'Do you see much of your brothers, Claude?'

'No, very little. They think I have no part or lot with them any longer, and Sam resents my trying to turn myself into a gentleman. Perhaps it was absurd to try. He is unfortunately prejudiced against all the people who wear good clothes and have white hands.'

'Is Sam like you to look at?'

'No, not in the least. Sam has red hair and is short. He is remarkable to look at, however, because he is always in earnest, and he looks strong.'

'I think I shall like Sam,' said Valentine, thoughtfully. 'He seems more interesting than Joe. Every man ought to be brave and strong.'

'Sam is very interesting,' said Claude. 'Especially when he is in a rage.'

'Are there any more?'

'There is only Melenda. She is a seamstress, and she lives with two or three girls who do the same kind of work. She is free and independent, she will receive no advice and will endure

no restraint, and she regards me with contempt because I am not a workman. At present I do not exactly know where she is living, because she has ordered me never to see her again. But I can find her out.'

'You must find her out,' said Valentine.

'In the matter of cousins now,' said Violet, with resignation.

'I dare say there are hundreds of cousins, but I do not know of any. The working people of London do not, as a rule, keep up cousinships. A family dropped down into this great city very easily gets scattered and dispersed.'

'Perhaps it is as well,' said Violet. 'Claude, do not despise me. We knew something of all this before, of course, but only in general terms, and thus have become romantic. The plain facts are overwhelming at first. I feel shivery. It is most delightful to have a brother who is a gentleman and has distinguished himself. But——'

'Our other family,' said Valentine, 'seemed always so far away. And now they have suddenly become so near.'

Then there was silence while a man might count twenty.

'They are not really nearer to you than they were before,' said Claude. 'You have not been taken to see them. You need not seek them out.'

'Claude!' said Valentine, reproachfully.

'You tell us we have another mother living, and you say we need not go to see her,' said Violet.

'Our own mother—the only one we know,' Valentine went on, 'has brought you to us. She means by your means to make us known to all our unknown relations. Claude, five or six years ago she wrote us a letter—it was addressed to us both, but it was meant for Polly. "Close beside us," she said, "unknown to us, are those who toil their lives away while we live at ease: they waste and expend themselves in drudgery while we cultivate both minds and soul. Do not forget that one of you belongs to them in a sense which the other does not. If, hereafter, you go among them, remember the old ties, and be full of love and compassion for them, for they are your brothers and sisters. Your brother's sin is your disgrace: your sister's shame is yours." Violet, you remember that letter?'

'As if I could ever forget it,' she replied gravely.

'You see, Claude,' Valentine explained, 'the feeling that we are not really sisters has made us more than sisters. One of us is a girl—oh! so humble and so poor—and the other is so rich

and so well born. And by this knowledge we are drawn together more closely than if we had been children of the same parents. Always and all day long, we have Polly with us—Polly-which-is Marla.'

'Always with us,' said Violet.

'She goes with us wherever we go: we look in each other's eyes and see, reflected there, her image: the shade of Polly is always with us; she has grown up with us; she has been always like us in face and height; but when we try to picture her as she would have been if she had been left among her friends—then Claude, Violet and I cannot agree.'

'I know very well what she would have been,' said Violet. 'I have seen her in the street. She would have a great lump of hair upon her forehead, and she would wear a grey ulster or a red crossover; she would laugh very loud and she would walk three abreast——'

'Oh no,' said Valentine, 'Polly would be dressed like other workgirls, I suppose, but she would be a gentle creature full of sweet and generous thoughts.'

'Who would have put them in her mind?' asked Violet. 'Do sweet thoughts grow in girls' working-rooms? Claude, what do you think? Could Polly be in the least like Valentine?'

It was nearly twelve when Claude left them. They had been sitting without lights at the open window looking across upon the park. The room was full of moonlight strong enough to suppress the lamp before the house as the electric light puts out the yellow light of gas; their hearts glowed within them; the eyes of the girls were soft with sympathy and newly born love; the young man's pulse beat faster and his cheek burned, as he took their hands.

'Claude,' said Valentine, 'tell us—always—everything.'

'He will,' said Violet. 'He trusts us already. Oh, Claude, you have made us so happy.'

When he was gone, the two girls fell into each other's arms.

'Val,' said one. 'He is my very own—my brother to myself. But you may love him too.'

'Oh, Violet,' said the other. 'That poor blind woman in the almshouse, who worked so hard. She is, I am sure, she is my mother.'

(To be continued.)

Suns and Meteors.

IT may seem strange to associate suns and meteors, fixed stars and shooting stars. One can scarcely imagine bodies more unlike—suns, the mightiest, because the most massive, of all the subjects of astronomical research, and meteors, many of which are so small that in their brief rush through our air they are entirely dissipated, and in a sense destroyed. For millions, nay, for hundreds of millions of years, a sun endures, pouring forth moment by moment supplies of light and heat—the life of worlds circling around him—in quantities so enormous that the human mind is utterly unable to conceive them. The falling star glows but for a few seconds, and then its brief career comes to an end. Weighed in the scales of science, the suns which people space are found to outweigh, severally, such globes as our earth, hundreds of thousands of times: the falling star has also been weighed, and its average weight is found to be but a few grains!

Yet, as shooting stars have been unmistakably associated with comets, which seem so utterly unlike them, so have they now been connected, by evidence which seems too strong to be resisted, with suns. Quite recently, indeed, meteors of a certain kind have been discovered which tell us *that* respecting the noblest order of suns which no instruments made by man could have revealed.

Let us briefly consider the line of reasoning by which it has been shown that large numbers of the meteoric bodies which reach our earth from outer space have been ejected from the interior of suns, or of bodies in a sunlike state. We may then examine the new discovery, and consider its bearing on the theory of the origin of meteors.

In former times it was the received theory respecting meteors that they had their origin in the upper regions of the air. But it was at length proved that, instead of that long-received theory, a theory which had been rejected as too absurd for credence must be accepted. It was found that meteors reach our earth from interplanetary space. As Humboldt well expressed it, 'They bring to the earth extra-terrestrial matter; they are the only messengers which reach us from regions outside the world on which we live.'

But the nature of their paths was long unknown. All that had been proved was that they travel in flights around the sun as their ruling centre. The proof was two-fold. Because shooting stars are seen in showers on special days of the year—not of each year, but still so often as to show that the coincidence of date is no mere accident—it is certain that they travel on paths crossing the track of the earth at particular points. Each star-shower having a special date forms a distinct system. The second proof was equally decisive. The meteor-paths during any great display always seem to radiate from the same fixed point on the star sphere, no matter how many hours the display may last, or how much, therefore, that point may change in position with regard to the horizon. It follows that their paths are parallel before they reach the earth.

The last point is to be specially noticed. It not only affords a subsidiary proof of what was already established by the agreement of dates. It tells us something new about the meteors and their movements. The observer on earth is carried round the earth's axis during the display, by the earth's motion of rotation. This motion, though slow compared with the movement of the earth in her revolution around the sun, is nevertheless considerable in itself. At the equator, a point on the earth's surface moves rather more than 1,000 miles an hour; in latitude 45° north or south, the rate of motion is about 750 miles an hour. (London is carried round the earth's axis at the rate of more than ten miles per minute.) Now the earth travels round the sun at the rate of $18\frac{1}{2}$ miles in a second, and meteors would usually cross the earth's track with velocities greater than these, since a body travelling (as most meteors travel) around the sun, on an orbit extending far beyond the earth's, would have at the earth's distance from the sun a velocity of about 26 miles per second. The effects then of the earth's rotational movement, as hour by hour an observer's direction of motion (due to this cause) is altered, can but slightly modify the apparent direction of meteoric motion. Still it might be expected that in many cases these effects (which may be compared to the apparent change in the direction of rainfall, as our motion through the rain, in walking or riding, is modified) would be recognised. The circumstance that no observer of meteors has ever detected such effects shows that in all cases hitherto dealt with the velocities with which meteors encounter, or overtake, or pass athwart the earth are enormously greater than the velocities with which points on the earth's surface are carried round her

axis, and greater also than the velocities which the earth can communicate to bodies approaching her from outside.¹

From Olmstead's demonstrated theory of meteors (the credit of which has been very calmly bestowed of late on persons who had done no more than note a few circumstances consistent with it) has been followed, since 1866, by a series of interesting discoveries. It has been shown that the meteors of November 13-14 travel in a period of $33\frac{1}{3}$ years round the sun in a path extending beyond the orbit of the planet Uranus, and passing very close to this orbit at one point. It has been shown further that the meteors of August 10-11 and of November 13-14 travel on the tracks of known comets. It has been rendered highly probable that every meteor-system tells us of the course of a comet, though not necessarily of a comet now in existence, while every comet is followed by a train of meteoric attendants. This train, by the way, must by no means be confounded with the comet's tail—a very different formation and occupying an entirely different position. In the only case where the earth has ever been known to be approaching the track of a known comet, prediction was made (by Professor Alexander Herschel and myself) that a display of shooting stars would be seen, radiating from a particular point of the heavens, at the time when the earth was plunging through that comet's train of meteoric attendants; and this prediction was fulfilled to the letter. We may fairly infer that what has been shown of all the comets whose paths have crossed the earth's track is true of comets generally.

When so much as this was known about shooting stars, it was natural that astronomers should begin to form ideas as to the origin of these bodies. Accordingly a theory was advanced in 1866 by Signor Schiaparelli of Milan, which, because no one at the time dwelt on any of its shortcomings, or advanced any other theory, has come to be regarded by many as an accepted theory, and was so spoken of recently by Professor Young, of Princeton, N.J., in his farewell address before the American Association for the Advancement of Science!

Schiaparelli's theory was this:—He assumed that flights of

¹ The velocity which the earth could communicate to a body drawn to her surface from an indefinitely great distance by her own attraction only would be nearly seven miles per second; but the bodies which come near the earth, or actually encounter her, are already travelling, for the most part, with much greater velocities, communicated by solar attraction; and she has not time, during their swift rush towards or past her, to impart more than a tithe of the velocity which she could communicate were she alone at work upon them, and they had no sun-imparted velocities.

meteors are travelling about through the realms of interstellar space in the form of nebulous clouds. Under the attraction of some sun towards which their course has already in some degree directed them, they move towards the region wherein his family are travelling. If by chance a flight of meteors should come near enough to one of the members of such a family, it is deflected from the course it had been following, and *may* (under particular conditions) be retarded. If so the future course of that flight of meteors will be a closed though eccentric orbit around the sun attended on by that disturbing planet. Such closed orbit will necessarily pass through the point where that disturbance was produced by which the meteor flight was, in a sense, captured. The theory requires further that an immense number of such captures should be made. For our earth passes through great numbers of meteor flights, and it is certain that for each meteor system (among those captured) through which our earth passes, there must be millions to which she does not draw near.

That this speculation—for it is obviously nothing more—should be described by so careful a student of astronomy as Professor Young, in terms implying that it is a theory based on the thorough investigation of an adequate amount of evidence, is strange, to say the least of it! One speaks of the Copernican system as the received theory of planetary motion, but even Laplace's widely known hypothesis of the origin of the planetary system is not called the 'received theory.' Newton's theory of universal gravitation is received, but Le Sage's speculation respecting the origin of the force of attraction is regarded as a speculation only. In like manner the theory that meteor systems travel around the sun, or rather that all meteoric bodies reach our earth from outside with planetary velocities, is established by evidence which cannot be shaken; but the suggestion that meteors are drawn from interstellar space by our sun's attraction, and then by the casual intervention of one or other of the giant planets forced to travel on a closed path around the sun, is but a speculation, as little based on any real evidence as the old-fashioned idea that rain comes down upon the earth from some great reservoir of water above the crystalline.

Of the general idea that meteors, and therefore comets, come to us from interstellar space, it may be said that in one sense it is manifestly probable, if not certain, in regard at least to many systems of meteors. Of many comets and meteors we have to admit that unquestionably the region whence they came on their last visit to the earth was that vast realm outside the solar domain

which we call interstellar space. It is one thing, however, to admit this, another and a very different matter to regard interstellar space as a sort of breeding-place for meteors and comets. To explain them thus is to interpret a marvel by a miracle. It may be difficult to say whence meteors came to occupy in such inconceivable numbers the interstellar spaces; but it would be hopeless to attempt to show how they might be understood to have been there from the beginning.

But while there is this overwhelming negative objection to Schiaparelli's speculation, which in effect explains nothing, there is a positive objection of the most decisive nature. It is one which I pointed out long since, one whose validity has been admitted, and one which has never yet been in any way answered—though Professor Young has suggested that possibly some way of answering it *may* yet be suggested.

I will not here enter on the considerations, chiefly mathematical, on which the objection I am about to indicate is based. I will note only what is the certain result of applying mathematical tests. The giant planets *cannot* do what Schiaparelli's theory requires that they should do. The individual members of a flight of meteors travelling from interstellar space towards the solar system *may* chance to pass near enough to one of the giant planets to be caused thenceforth to travel on closed paths around the sun; nay, the flight itself might be captured (in this sense) bodily. But there is no possible way in which a flight of meteors, consisting, like the November meteors (the Leonids¹) and the August meteors (the Perseids¹), of many billions of billions of discrete bodies, could be so captured by a member of the sun's family, even by the giant Jupiter himself, as to travel on the paths which these systems actually pursue. As a matter of fact, if the Leonids have been captured at all, as Schiaparelli imagined, it must have been by Uranus, whose capturing power is utterly insignificant compared with that possessed by Jupiter and Saturn; while the Perseids, if captured by any member of the solar system, must have been captured either by some planet exterior to Neptune or by the earth herself; for the Leonids only approach the orbit of Uranus and the earth in their course around the sun, while the Perseids approach the orbit of no known planet except the earth. Now, taking the Leonids (for, be it observed, a single instance will

¹ The reader is not to suppose that the Leonids are the only November meteors, or the Perseids the only August meteors; I add these names to show which particular set of November meteors and which particular set of August meteors I am referring to.

suffice, and the Leonids have long been regarded as strikingly illustrating Schiaparelli's theory), we find that for a single member of this family to have had its path changed from one passing out into interstellar space to one having a period of $33\frac{1}{2}$ years—the actual period in which the Leonids complete their circuit—that meteoric body must have passed very close indeed to the globe of Uranus. A certain amount of the meteor's motion would have had to be withdrawn by the attractive power of Uranus, and as the velocity eventually abstracted is only the excess of the quantity abstracted during one part of the time when the body was near Uranus over the quantity added during the rest of that time, it is clear that Uranus must work very hard to produce the desired effect on a body which rushes past the planet with a sun-imparted velocity of several miles per second. When details are considered, it is found that the approach of a meteor to Uranus, as the meteor came in from outer space, would have to be so very close as to preclude the possibility that a flight of many billions of billions of meteors could *all* pass near enough to have that path assigned to them along which *all* the Leonids actually travel. And so with other cases—with every other case where the actual periods, and therefore velocities, of meteors are known.

Despite the opinion of Dr. Young, that in some way or other this objection may be explained away, I venture to say with the utmost confidence (and I think undue confidence about such matters is not a fault with which I can be charged) that the giant planets cannot have captured *one* of the flights of meteors whose true period of revolution has been determined. It may be that some among the four hundred or so of meteor systems which the earth encounters in the course of each yearly circuit around the sun have been captured in this particular way; but, so far as known facts are concerned, and especially those known facts which led Schiaparelli to formulate his so-called theory, it is certain not only that we have no evidence in its favour, but that all the real evidence is opposed to it.

It was this which led me to believe that meteors have had their origin, or that at any rate multitudes among known meteor systems have had their origin, in another way.

Note, first, that the researches of Stanislas Meunier and others have led many—Dr. Ball, of Dublin, for example—to the opinion that some at any rate among the meteors annually encountered by the earth are her own children. In other words, there are reasons for thinking that during some remote past period the

earth was able, being then full of the fiery energies of planetary youth, to eject from her interior flights of missiles—clouds of world-dust, so to speak—with such velocity that the matter thus ejected was free thenceforth to travel around the sun, with no other subservience to its parent orb than is involved in the circumstance that, for ever thereafter, the paths of such ejected missiles would cross, or pass very near to, the track of the earth.

With regard to this idea, which at first seems fanciful in the extreme, I may remark that there seems reason to believe that every orb in space passes through stages of orb-life which may be divided roughly into three: the sunlike, the earthlike, and the moonlike;¹ and therefore we must recognise in the past history of our earth a time when her energies were far more active than those she now has. We cannot infer her power of ejecting matter from her interior, when she was in the sun-like state, from that which she possesses now when she is in the middle of the life-bearing portion of her career. When she was a sun she was a very small sun, a mere dwarf compared with the giant Jupiter when he was a sun, and a mere speck of light compared with the mighty sun which rules our system. Yet she probably possessed then eruptive powers compared with which those she now possesses are as nought. But Krakatoa taught us recently, as at other times the earth-throes of Peru and Chili, of Sicily, Naples, Spain, and Iceland have taught us, that the earth's eruptive energies are even now in no sense contemptible. The probabilities are at least highly favourable to the theory enunciated by Dr. Ball. For the immense numbers of sporadic meteors encountered by our earth almost compel the belief that her track must be regarded as in a sense infested by meteors—crossed, that is, by greater numbers of these bodies than traverse similar parts of the solar system outside or within or above or below (north or south²) of the earth's path. This would mean, of course, that the earth has had something to do with the strewing of this track with meteors; and as the earth most assuredly has never had the power of drawing meteors from paths on which they had entered under solar influence (as Schiaparelli imagined that the giant planets

¹ Another classification may be suggested—the glowing vaporous state (like the sun's), the fiery state (like that in which the giant planets seem to be), the life-bearing state (like the earth's), the state of old age (of which Mars seems to afford an example), and the death-like state (which the moon seems to have reached).

² It is as correct to speak of north and south with reference to the plane in which the earth travels as with reference to the plane of the earth's equator.

might have done) it seems to follow inevitably that the earth has given birth to this surplus stock of earth-crossing meteors.

Let it next be noticed that there are certain families of comets which have been for many years associated with the giant planets. Many years ago, and long before I recognised the real meaning of the phenomenon, I wrote an essay, which appeared in a weekly magazine of wide circulation, in which I treated of the 'comet-families of the giant planets.' I gave this name to certain families of comets which, though circling around the sun as their real attracting centre, yet have paths approaching so near to the orbits of the giant planets that we may fairly regard these comets as in some way or other dependent on the giant planets—each on the particular giant planet with which it thus seems associated.

Now, as comets are known to be followed by trains of meteoric attendants, we may say that we have here a phenomenon closely akin to, if not practically identical with, the peculiarity in relation to the earth's orbit which Dr. Ball and others have endeavoured to explain (and, as I think, have successfully explained) by assuming that millions of years ago the earth herself ejected those particular meteors which form as it were the extra population of the earth's orbit region. So that we seem justified in adopting here, also, a similar explanation. Of course if Schiaparelli's theory were anything more than a speculation, and still more if it deserved to be regarded as a received theory, we might hesitate before we rejected what would be, in fact, an explanation of the very peculiarity we are considering. But we have seen that not only has Schiaparelli's theory no claim to be regarded as a received theory, or as a theory at all in any proper sense of the word, but there are objections to it which are in fact absolutely insurmountable. We therefore turn to the other explanation as one which here naturally suggests itself—we inquire at any rate whether the cometic and meteoric families of the giant planets may not be regarded as originally ejected, in the form of meteoric streams, from the giant planets, when these were in the sunlike state.

It is manifest that we are justified in assuming that if the earth ejected meteoric bodies when she was in the sunlike state, the giant planets would have done so likewise. Therefore there are *à priori* reasons for regarding as probable the theory to which we have thus been led by *à posteriori* considerations. Moreover, as the giant planets are still in a semi-sunlike state, we see that in all probability the meteor streams expelled from these planets

would retain something of their original coherence, that is, they would appear in company with comets (each comet representing a cloud of meteors originally expelled as a coherent group). Thus we could understand the existence of the comet families of the giant planets, though, of course, we can also understand that many comets formerly belonging to these families have disappeared as comets; indeed, we have been able to watch, in the case of Biela's comet, the process of disintegration, by which one of the members of Jupiter's comet family has ceased to exist as a comet, and remains only as a stream of meteors.

But now two problems of interest present themselves to our consideration. In the first place, we have in the sun an example of an orb in that particular stage of orb-life during which, we have been led to suppose, meteoric ejection takes place, and we are naturally led to inquire whether the sun ever ejects flights of discrete bodies from his interior; and this inquiry will naturally be extended to his fellow-suns the stars. In the second place, we are led to ask how those comets and meteor streams are to be explained which assuredly have not been ejected from the earth or any of the planets; and *this* inquiry will have to be extended to those comets and meteoric streams which not only cannot have come from any member of the solar system, but cannot possibly have been derived from the central ruler of that system.

Now, among the remarkable discoveries made by means of the spectroscope, one of the most striking has been the recognition of tremendous solar disturbances of an eruptive or rather of an explosive nature. In 1872, Prof. Young, of Princeton,¹ N.J., observed a solar eruption, in which what looked like filaments of glowing hydrogen (averaging a thousand miles or so in length!) seemed to travel upwards from the sun's surface at the rate of about 145 miles per second, till they had reached a height of not less than 210,000 miles. Even then they did not cease to ascend; but, losing their lustre, faded out of view. If shreds of hydrogen were really shot out on that occasion, we should scarcely find in the event anything bearing on the matter before us—the possible ejection of meteoric matter. But no one who considers the phenomenon with attention, or studies the evidence obtained in

¹ Of Dartmouth, N.H., when the discovery was made. It has been hoped that Prof. Young, with the much more powerful telescope at Princeton, will make discoveries even exceeding in interest those which he made at Dartmouth. But little worth mentioning has been done. Indeed, it seems as though astronomy had been all but dead in America during the last few years. Routine observatory work has gone on, but no discovery of any interest has been made.

regard to it, can for a moment imagine that what look like ejections of glowing hydrogen can be really of that nature. It is obvious alike from *à priori* considerations and *à posteriori* evidence that the jet-like streams of hydrogen are in reality the *tracks* of ejected matter, solid or liquid. For, not only is it impossible that streams of such a substance as hydrogen should be ejected to heights of many thousands of miles through an atmosphere of probably greater and certainly equal density, but the shapes assumed by the hydrogen streaks are inconsistent with the idea that they can have been themselves ejected. For instance, the shreds of hydrogen observed by Prof. Young (some of which were thousands of miles long) were irregular in shape. Had they really been travelling through a resisting atmosphere, at the enormous rate of 145 miles per second, they would certainly have been pear-shaped, rounded in front and tailed behind, like fire-balls in our own air. But they resembled, rather, the irregular streaks showing where our air has been rendered luminous by the passage of meteoric masses through it.

Prof. Young's observation proved in fact that on that particular occasion, the sun had shot out from his interior a flight of many thousands of bodies. The bodies themselves would not be visible, because the phenomenon was observed through a telespectroscope, admitting only red light of the same tint as the red of glowing hydrogen. But the light from the heated hydrogen along the tracks of these ejected missiles would be clearly visible. The streaks would, of course, seem to ascend. For they would always be close up to the missiles producing them, so that their forward ends would advance, while their rear ends would seem also to advance as the light gradually faded out along those parts of the track which were farthest from the advancing missile.

What Prof. Young saw has been seen since, at various observatories. The sun then *has* the power of ejecting matter from his interior—presumably in volcanic explosions. Moreover, a calculation which I made respecting Prof. Young's explosion shows that the matter ejected on that occasion passed away from the sun with such velocity that it would never return to him. Those missiles were thenceforth akin to meteoric bodies travelling freely through space.

We may fairly extend the evidence thus given respecting the one sun we are able to study to other suns—and the extension may be made to other suns in *time* as well as to other suns in *space*. If the one sun we are able to study, because he is comparatively

near to us, and because he is a sun *now*, is able to eject flights of bodies from his interior to vast distances, and even to cast such bodies for ever away from him, the other suns which people space possess in all probability a similar power, and orbs which *were* suns in the remote past, possibly also orbs which *will be* suns hereafter, were or will be similarly active.

Taking first the extension of the evidence given by the sun to bodies no longer suns, we see that what has been already suggested in other ways is confirmed by the evidence of the actual eruptive power possessed by the sun. We see that millions of years ago, when Jupiter and Saturn were active suns, they probably possessed the power of ejecting flights of bodies from their interior as the sun does now, and many millions of years ago, when our earth and her fellow terrestrial planets were sunlike bodies, they were similarly active (each in its degree). For it is, of course, obvious that though a body like Jupiter would have nothing like the sun's eruptive energy (in amount), such an orb would need nothing like that energy to eject matter from its interior never to return. So with a globe like our earth. The sun must eject a body with a velocity of 380 miles per second, that it may never return to him; and Jupiter would have to impart a velocity of about forty miles per second to reject for ever a mass erupted from his interior; but in the case of our earth a velocity of seven miles per second would suffice to carry ejected matter for ever away from her (apart, of course, from the chance of subsequent capture by accidental encounter with the parent orb, whose course the track of the ejected mass would always thereafter approach or intersect). Now, though no volcanic explosions which at present take place eject bodies from the earth with anything like this velocity, yet remembering the intense activity of an orb in the sunlike stage, as compared with the energies of the life-bearing stage, we see that even apart from the evidence given by solar explosions, and from the subsidiary evidence given by the meteoric paths, we might safely infer that the volcanic outbursts taking place during our earth's sunlike stage were probably quite sufficiently intense to eject matter for ever from her interior. If such an explosion as that of Krakatoa can take place now, outbursts of the mightier sort necessary for meteor-ejection may well have occurred when the earth was a small sun. We have similar actual evidence even in the case of the giant planets; for, whatever theory may be formed of the great red spot on Jupiter, there can be no doubt that a disturbance affecting an

area nearly as large as the whole surface of the earth, and lasting seven years in full activity, implies most tremendous energies when Jupiter was in the sunlike stage of his career.

As to the future, we cannot speak so confidently. We know not what the bodies are, if bodies there be, which will hereafter become suns. Possibly the great gaseous nebulae are forming into stars. It seems unreasonable at any rate to suppose that as there are suns much younger than our own (Secchi's first order) as well as suns much older (Secchi's third and fourth orders) and suns long since dead (being dark), there are not also suns as yet unformed.

Ranging through space we recognise in every star a sun, not only like our sun pouring out light and heat, but doing doubtless such other work as our sun is doing. If he pours out in a single explosion thousands of meteoric bodies, in the millions of years of his life he must have poured out many millions of millions of such bodies. The millions of millions of other suns which people space must have done likewise. So that inconceivable numbers of bodies expelled from existent suns must now be traversing space.

In such meteor streams—or comets—we find the explanation of those comets which reach our neighbourhood from outside the planetary system. Some of the comets of long period may be regarded as having had their origin from our own sun, but only those whose paths approach very near to his globe. For although planetary perturbations might prevent a body ejected by the sun from actually returning to him, as, if undisturbed, it must inevitably do, such perturbations could not possibly give to a sun-expelled body a path passing far from the sun's globe.

The comets, therefore, or meteor systems which travel around the sun on orbits passing far outside the planetary system, and those whose orbits carry them away from our sun never to return, are explained as flights of bodies ejected either from our sun himself (in the case of a very small proportion only) or from other suns.

But among the suns there are some so much mightier than the rest that we might expect the meteor systems sprung from them to differ in marked degree from all others. I refer to the giant suns like Sirius, Vega, Altair, and others of Secchi's first order.¹ Sirius, judged by the quantity of light he emits, is probably at least a thousand times larger than the sun; and we

¹ As classified by their spectra.

may infer that the other suns of the same order are in like degree superior to our sun both in size and in energy.

Surely the meteor flights ejected from these giant suns would be as markedly distinct from those ejected by our sun and his fellows, as these meteor flights are distinct from those ejected by the giant planets, and these in turn from those ejected by the earth and her fellow planets of the terrestrial order. In particular, the velocities of comets or meteor flights ejected from Sirius, Vega, and their fellows, would be apt to exceed enormously the velocities belonging to meteors ejected from suns of the same order as our own.

When I was first led to adopt the theory which I have here indicated, I thought it likely some evidence might be obtained of meteor systems ejected from the giant suns. But no such evidence actually existed at that time—about twelve years since. Now, however, evidence of absolutely decisive nature, evidence not only confirming my theory, but explicable—so far as I can see—in no other way, has been obtained.

Five years ago Mr. Denning, of Bristol, announced that he had recognised some meteor systems which radiate for several months in succession from the same point in the star sphere, a result which seemed so surprising that at that time many rejected it. I rejected it myself for awhile—partly because it seemed to me too good to be true. But it has since been shown to be undoubtedly true.

Now, the same reason which forces us to regard the radiation of meteors during several hours from the same point, as proving that our earth's velocity of rotation is insignificant compared with the velocities of these meteors, compels us to regard the velocity of the earth's revolution as insignificant compared with the velocities of meteors which radiate during several months from the same region among the stars. In six hours the rotational motion of a point on the earth changes through a right angle; in three months the motion of revolution of the earth herself changes in direction in the same degree. But one motion has a rate of only a third of a mile per second even at the equator, the other has a rate more than fifty times greater. Mr. Denning's observation shows that there are meteor systems travelling hundreds of times faster than the earth in her swift rush round the sun. These meteor systems can be no other than those which have been expelled from the giant suns.

Hence finally we recognise, by direct evidence,¹ four orders of suns and four orders of meteors :—

First, earth-suns, long since dark, which expelled such meteor systems as those which have been recognised as earth-born.

Secondly, giant planets, long since deprived of sun-like brilliancy, but not yet dark, which expelled such meteor systems as now travel on orbits passing near the paths of Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune.

Thirdly, bodies like our sun, which expelled and still expel such meteor systems as travel on orbits extending far beyond the solar system.

Fourthly, bodies like the giant suns, which expelled meteor systems travelling with much greater velocities than could be imparted by our own sun or his fellows of the same order.

RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

¹ I have said nothing here of the evidence given by the microscopic, chemical, and physical examination of meteors. Such evidence has in reality *proved* that those bodies were once in the interior of orbs in a sunlike state.

Sea-Spells.

THERE is a charm that haunts the air,
 A subtle spell from restless seas,
 Which finds and follows everywhere
 Sons of the tide-swept Orcades,
 Still in our hearts, where'er we roam,
 Wakening fair memories of home.

'Twas sweet in autumn days to lie
 On the hill-side and watch the bay,
 Its colours varying with the sky,
 From clearest blue to tenderest grey,
 With gleams of silver sunlight barred,
 Or with white foam-flakes streaked and starred.

Then Fancy filled the quiet place,
 And with the magic of her wand
 Brought back once more the vanished race,
 The fabled folk of fairy-land,
 And, working transformation strange,
 Touched all the world to glorious change.

The great black cormorants, that flew
 Across the point from sea to sea,
 Were dragons of the darkest hue,
 Monsters of dread and mystery,
 Most awful when by night they came,
 Their angry nostrils breathing flame.

Far, where the eastern heaven bent
 To meet the waves, with favouring breeze
 The Viking war-ships homeward went,
 Laden with spoil from southern seas,
 With the proud raven flag unfurled,
 That held in terror half the world.

SEA-SPILLS.

When, stealing round the distant shore,
A boat came slipping through the sea,
I knew some gallant knight she bore,
To set a captive princess free ;
Soft wafted by enchanted gales,
A golden bark with silver sails.

There from the quiet hills I caught
The secrets in their hearts they hold,
Where the strange swarthy dwarf-folk wrought
The clear blue steel and gleaming gold ;
In dream-wrapt silence listening,
I heard their mighty hammers ring.

In thunders of the breakers borne
Upon the winds for many a mile,
I heard the giants' shouts of scorn
Roaring their wrath from isle to isle,
Or bellowings from long shores and low,
Where blue sea-bulls roam to and fro.

So through the shadowy autumn days
Would Fancy work her wondrous spell,
And ever cast an added grace
On the fair land I love so well :
To all her children she must stand
For ever ' the belovèd land.'

D. J. ROBERTSON.

A Rustic Comedy.

IN the straggling, forlorn, unbeautiful Northumbrian village of Blackford there was, half a century ago, only one comfortable-looking building. It was none of the dwellings of the coal and lime carters, the hedgers and ditchers, or the drainers, who formed the bulk of the population, for their low drooping roofs, mended here and there with tarpaulin, spoke too eloquently of damp, draught, and over-pressure; it was not the red-tiled croft-house inhabited by Willie Allan, the clever, lazy, kindly, cock-fighting, dog-fancying, boxing, wrestling, swimming, bee-keeping tenant of the little farm, for bachelordom and neglect had combined with Willie's devotion to hobbies of one kind and another to create of it and its surroundings an embodiment of picturesque disorder; it was not the great austere-looking, square-built Presbyterian meeting-house, with its prison-like walls and narrow windows; far less was it the slated, shabby-genteel manse, for in cold weather the effect of the whitewash upon it was to threaten the spectator with a fit of the ague. No; on any gusty day in November, when the very trees on the hilltops seemed to have turned their shivering backs to the breeze that whistled through their branches and whirled away their red-tinted leaves in a madcap dance, and the diminutive cot-houses looked almost as though crouching to escape the blast, which the gaunt old manse faced in haggard despair, the 'Red Lion' Inn alone, with its comfortable overcoat of impervious thatch, retained its aspect of quiet comfort, and towards evening the ruddy glare of its kitchen fire pressingly invited the toil-worn cottars to forsake their scolding wives and brawling children, their scanty fires and draughty houses, and enjoy its comfortable warmth. And often at the same time there would be a light at one of the two attic windows that peered out from the roof like a pair of open grey eyes from under lids of thatch. For one of these attic rooms was the favourite resort of Adam Black, the thriving publican of Blackford. Hither at night did he often resort if business was dull down below to smoke his pipe, to think over his plans, and to

calculate his ingoings and outgoings; for, as he would sometimes remark, 'It took a deal of worry for a man as could neither read nor write to keep a true reckoning,' and Adam's natural abilities had not been brightened up by education.

That did not hinder him from being greatly liked and respected in Blackford. The worst that could be said about him was that he was rather hard, and as a matter of fact there was little softness in his nature, though he never failed to greet his customers with a smile and jest, and if the smile was a little mechanical and the jest the worse for wear it mattered little to quiet country folk, who were not ashamed to laugh at the twentieth repetition of a witticism. And it was everywhere agreed that he kept a model public-house—never, for instance, allowing any fighting to go on in a conspicuous place, but forcing the combatants to have it out, if they really meant business, in a secluded backyard, where they could black each other's eyes with the most perfect safety and comfort. Any man might go to the 'Red Lion' with the assurance that he would not be made a fool of. Adam knew the drinking capacity of every full-grown male in the neighbourhood of Blackford, and would let none transgress his limit, or, if an accident did happen, generally managed to avoid anything in the nature of a public exhibition. And besides, the villagers all knew him to be, in their own language, as game as a bantam. At times Adam might in bargain-making show himself not over-scrupulously above-board, and, generally speaking, what he could get he took, but nevertheless he steered notably clear of paltry meannesses, and he was known to be stubbornly faithful to all his friends—a man, on the whole, with a conscience not too troublesome, but far from dead.

In domestic life Adam was a martinet. He ruled his son Aleck, his red-haired servant Bet, and even his niece Kitty with a rod of iron. Prompt obedience was the unwritten law of the household. Only Kitty, besides being the smartest, prettiest, and cleverest girl in Blackford, was so wayward and spirited that not even her uncle, who liked her better than he liked anybody else in the world, was able to keep her entirely under control.

It was a great grief to Adam when he found out that Kitty was in a mood to throw herself away upon Willie Allan. Not that he disliked Willie—nobody could do that—but he thought him unlikely to be a good husband, that is a thriving one, able to keep his family comfortable, for he never gave his mind to his business, but wasted his time over what Adam sometimes called his menagerie, for the croft-house was almost a Noah's ark in its way. The chance visitor was certain to find at every season of the year

a litter of pups before the kitchen fire, and an old owl and still more ancient magpie carried on an unceasing struggle for the favourite perch above the kitchen clock. What had once been the best bedroom was converted into a flight for canaries, and there were always hanging about cages containing finches, linnets, thrushes, blackbirds, and even sparrows, for Willie was a noted experimentalist in the art of crossing, and could show an assortment of the most strangely marked hybrids. The garden was stocked with bees and the barn with Russian rabbits. Twenty different kinds of fancy poultry were allowed to spoil the crops, and the dovecot was inhabited by as many varieties of pigeons. In the pigstye he had a tame badger, and there was a litter of foxes in one outhouse and an otter in another. Whatever had life had a deep interest for Willie, as it had had a deep interest for his father before him, for, as well may be imagined, these tastes were inherited. But he gratified them at the expense of agriculture. Everybody said the croft would pay splendidly to a man who knew how to work it, but the Allans were not likely to make a fortune there or anywhere else.

It was therefore not without reason that Adam was set against his niece taking up with Willie; he considered it would be throwing herself away. And he believed that he possessed a powerful instrument for enforcing his own view, for he had full command of Kitty's little fortune—something like a hundred pounds—left her by her father, Adam's elder brother, who had preceded him in the occupation of the 'Red Lion.' Whatever it amounted to it was all in the big box that stood in Adam's favourite attic room, for he had a deep-rooted suspicion of banks, and, like many other country folk of that time, held that his savings could not be safer than under his own lock and key.

'If you marry Allan,' he said to Kitty, and she knew that no nice scruples about right and wrong would hinder him from keeping his word, 'not a penny will you get from me.'

The truth was that he had quite another scheme in his head. Why should Kitty look beyond his son Aleck? True, they were cousins, but the prejudice against cousins marrying was not strong in the neighbourhood, and then what advantages there were! Kate was a splendid manager, and Aleck, though he had not his father's spirit and cleverness, was a hard worker and very careful—too careful, some people said, for whereas his father was only keen and saving, he was as mean and hard as a miser. But in match-making these are not defects to make a party ineligible, and best

of all, thought Adam, 'there'll be no need to divide the money.' And accordingly he spared no effort to enforce his will, so that poor Kitty had a hard time of it, what with her uncle's threats and the no more agreeable persuasions of her money-grubbing suitor. Yet she was far too spirited to yield, and in her inmost mind was resolved to have both the sweetheart and the money, for who needed it if not careless, squandering Willie?

It was no fault in her eyes that her lover cared nothing whatever for her fortune, though she would scold and rate him well for his indifference. One winter night, as she was returning from a neighbouring village about three miles off, to which she had been sent by her uncle, Willie quite accidentally met her, and they had a happy walk homeward along a lane, on the snow covering of which the moonlight fell fair and softly, making the hard wheel tracks glitter and silvering the half-black, half-whitened hedges-rows. Willie never before had seemed so true and earnest and loyal as Kitty poured into his ear the story of her persecution.

'Never mind, lass,' he said, 'let him keep the money. I've little, but I'm not in debt, and if you'll but promise to come to the croft, I'll—yes, Kitty—I'll sell every live thing I have and work day and night for you.'

'No, no, Willie, there's no need for that; but do you think I'll give up my rights to please that wretched Aleck? It's just what he wants, for me to marry you and leave everything to him. He would be pleased to see me quarrel with uncle, for it's not me but the money he wants. But if he proposes again, do you know, I've a good mind to take him at his word, just out of spite. That's the worst I could do to him——'

'Whist! whist!' Willie interrupted her with; 'you're jokin', lass; but I dinna like it. Say anything but that. You would never leave me for a bit dirty gold.'

'Would I not?' queried Kitty, who was an incorrigible tease; 'you'll maybe see me make a runaway match of it; aye, and glad you would be after a while to get quit of me. But here's the door. If I'm not away, I'll maybe be in the wood on Sunday night;' and she was off, leaving Willie to go home so thoughtful that he quite forgot to feed his tame fox until wakened in the night by its yelping, a thing that had never happened in his life before.

Business was very dull in the 'Red Lion' next afternoon, and Adam retired to his attic room, where Kitty had a cheerful fire, before which she sat knitting. Meg, the celebrated black-and-white greyhound, of which Adam was very proud, stretched its aristocratic body out on the rug, while beside it reclined a very

different-looking dog. The rough, short, curly hair of the latter was that of a terrier, but its long face and limbs and slender contour demonstrated its relation to the breed of which Meg was a pure and beautiful specimen. Jack, as he was called, was the very mongrel for a poacher.

Adam's conversation did not relate to his hounds, however, but to his son. He referred to Willie Allan with a moderation and impressiveness his niece had not expected to find.

'Bairn,' he said, 'ye'll rue a lifetime if ye marry a man like that. It might be fine a twelvemonth, but after he'll get worse than ever, and the work and anxiety'll all fall on you. Better take a man like Aleck, that you can depend on to keep you comfortable, than one like Allan, that'll expect you to take care o' him.'

'Ah!' replied Kitty, 'had Aleck been the man his father is I would never have looked to another, but I cannot trust him.'

'That's where you're wrong, lass. Sandy's a well-bred lad, both on the mother's side and the father's. There's not a better bred lad in Blackford, and blood is sure to tell. He may be quiet, but he's game, I warrant you. I could trust him with all I have.'

'You'd better not, uncle; and as to breeding, do you mind Meg's last pups that you expected to be so good, and still had to drown, for, says you, she's bred back. Well, I think Sandy's been bred back, and that's why I want nothing to do with him.'

'No, no, Kitty. If Aleck was what you say, I would have kicked him to the door sooner than let him marry you. But he's a true lad, for all his backwardness, and has a strong notion for you—a strong notion for him,' Adam repeated.

'But if Aleck was a bad, treacherous man, and didn't care a bit for me, would you leave me free to take anybody I like?' queried Kitty.

'Sartainly, sartainly,' answered her uncle.

'Well, if I thought his blood as good as his breeding I would take him to-morrow,' began Kitty, but she stopped, for Adam was not listening. Something had caught his eye outside, and a stranger to his habits might have thought him wrapt in contemplation of the winter sunset's reddened clouds or the snowy landscape. The window commanded a view of a forty-acre field which stretched away from the village gardens to a great thick wood, from which it was separated by a brook. In the very middle of it stood a solitary tree, the boughs of which shone like dark tracery in the evening light. 'Look yonder,' said Adam,

pointing to the foot of this tree. A timid, limping, hungry hare, probably tempted by the remembrance of the vegetables it had sometimes on moonlight nights found in the gardens, was making towards them in little starts and runs followed by stoppages, during which it would sit with its long ears pricked up to listen to or scent danger. Could any Blackford man look on that sight unmoved? It might have turned the old minister himself into a poacher, and the temptation was quite too strong for Adam. The very dogs, by the eager way in which they started up to follow him, seemed to see a chance of sport in his looks.

He was no sooner gone than Kitty did a very curious thing. Running to her own apartment, she hurriedly produced a biggish bunch of old keys, and began trying the lock of Adam's chest until she got one to fit. Then she opened it and looked in. But no pile of gold met her eye. Adam had a second box within the big one, and it too was locked. Kitty did not seem at all disappointed. Without touching anything in the box, she let the lid fall, carefully locked it, and put her keys back where she had found them.

Had Willie Allan been there to watch her next proceedings he would have been hurt and surprised, for the little flirt, after smartening herself up before the mirror, proceeded to the kitchen, where Aleck was busy polishing the harness of the doctor's horse, which happened to be kept at the 'Red Lion.' Ensconcing herself snugly in the arm-chair in the corner, she plainly said, by look and movement, 'Come, woo me.' Though Aleck, her clumsy lover, did not lack the inclination to respond, he possessed none of that spirit of gallantry which ought to have made him quick to take the hint. Kitty's eyes were beginning to twinkle with amusement at her and his own embarrassment, when luckily Adam looked in with the hare, but he forgot all about Jack's performance in his pleasure at seeing the 'cousins so friendly. 'Aha!' he cried, 'but you are two sly ones—courtin' like that whenever the old man's back's turned,' and in great glee he went away and left them.

'What do you think of that, now?' said Kitty, laughing.

'I wish it was true,' said Aleck.

'That is because you're a fool,' said Kitty. 'What on earth should we be sweetheartin' for? What kind o' life would you live here if you were married, Sandy? As long as Adam Black's here—and that may be twenty years yet—Adam Black will be master. And as for you, you'll toil and moil and mourn till the grey hairs come, and you'll get his money when you're past enjoying it,

That's the look-out for a woman with a notion to you, my lad.'

'I'll not deny you've hit it, Kitty. It's a poor spec at the best keeping a country public; the hinds haven't the money to spend. If I had father's savings, now, I wouldn't bide here past the term. I'd get a place nearer the pits—them's the lads to spend.'

'If I were a man like you, Aleck, do you know what I'd do? I would make a big try to get these same savings and bolt. If you were quick and clever enough they'd never catch you, and you could change your name and get a new start.'

'Ah! I've thought o' that, but the old one's ower cunnin'. I believe he wears the key of the big chest always round his neck.'

'If that's all your trouble, I know where to get a key. But would you not be frightened, Aleck? Folk might call it robbery.'

'That wouldn't be true. The money is mine as much as his, for I've worked hardest for it, and there's a lot of it yours, Kitty, and he wouldn't make much noise about it. He wouldn't disgrace the name by making it a byword, and he likes you so much that he wouldn't seek to get you into bad trouble. There would be murder, though, if he got hold of us himself.'

That was the way in which the elopement was planned. During the next few days the cousins were in almost constant conversation, and even shrewd Adam was deceived, and thought, poor man, that his niece had forsaken Willie Allan, not from any mercenary motives, but because of the weighty advice he had given her. Never had he felt more serenely happy than on the next Sunday afternoon. The hare had been cooked exactly to his liking—the fore parts in soup, the hind parts in a pie; and after a dinner that might have pleased an emperor, followed by a taste of his fine old brandy—brandy kept for the exclusive use of the fox-hunting squires who would sometimes lunch at the 'Red Lion' when their meet was in the neighbourhood—he sallied forth for his usual Sunday afternoon walk, pipe in mouth, and Jack and Meg at his heels.

'If you want a bit sport,' said Kitty to him aside as he was going out, 'take a turn in the forty-acre about dusk.' He had no chance of asking her meaning, for there were others about, but he said to himself, 'Ah! she's a sharp one, is Kit. That means another good dinner, or I'm cheated,' and went his way.

No sooner was he gone than a tremendous bustle began in the public-house, although it was shut on Sundays. Aleck did not know what to take and what to leave.

'It's four weary miles we have to walk into Scotland,' said Kitty, 'so the less we have to carry the better, Aleck. That box 'll be a weight to take in itself, lad.'

'We'll have plenty of time, though. Bet can say we've gone for a walk, and he'll be as pleased as Punch. Have you opened the chest?'

'Yes,' said Kitty, 'it's all right. The only pity is I could not open the little box, and you'll have to take it with us.'

Darkness was just falling when the two fugitives emerged from the 'Red Lion.' The peaceful villagers were all within doors, for it was bitterly cold, and the sharp north wind had begun to drive stray flakes of snow in front of it. Which way should they take? There could be no doubt of that: down the hill by the foot-road, across the brook by the single-plank bridge, through the wood until the highway was reached, and then a bold push to get across the Border. Many a Northumbrian lad and lass in the old time had trudged to the altar in that style, but few of the gallants carried a treasure with them such as was under Aleck's arm. Many a sharp look the runaways cast on every side, lest there should be any suspicious witness of their flight, but not a soul did they see, and the friendly snow dropped softly on their treacherous footprints. Neither said a word till they reached the old willow, near which the brook was crossed by a trembling plank. Then Kitty grew nervous.

'I'm frightened to cross the burn,' she said; 'go you first.'

'Be quick, then,' he answered, 'I'll hold it;' and, getting swiftly to the other side, he seized the end of the unsteady bit of wood.

But, instead of following at once, Kitty screamed, 'There's Jack! your father must be chasing us.'

Aleck stood undecided a moment, then dashed the frail bridge into the water. 'Hide where you can,' he shouted, 'he can't jump the burn, and I'll make off with the money.'

'Oh! he'll kill me,' pled the girl. 'Don't run away from me, Aleck.'

'You shouldn't have been so slow,' he retorted, with the box already under his arm.

'Stop, you blackguardly thief! stop, I say!' hoarsely shouted his father, running up from where he had been looking after some rabbits. But the son turned in terror and fled—not far, however, for a new-comer appeared on the scene. Willie Allan, true to his appointment with Kitty, though he hardly expected to see her,

emerged from the wood. 'Hulloa!' he said, placing himself in front of the runaway, 'what's up?'

'Fell him dead!' yelled Adam.

'Let him go,' said Kitty, but so softly that her lover could not make out what she said.

'You'd better turn back,' he said to Aleck, but the fugitive, brought to bay, was desperate.

'Let me be,' he said, 'or by —— I'll stab you,' drawing a claspknife from his pocket.

'You scoundrel!' cried the other, in a white heat, 'would you commit murder?'

Willie was credited with possessing more 'science' than any other man in Blackford, and where will you find good boxing if not in North Northumberland? He made a feint, and the vengeful blade of his adversary glittered in a momentary streak of moonlight, but to no purpose, for a side-leap carried its object out of reach, and Willie landed a left-hander like a horse's kick just above the right eye of his opponent, who fell all his length on the snow, and in a trice was divested of his knife, which the conqueror threw contemptuously into the brook. 'Get up and fight like a man,' he said, but Aleck was beaten.

Adam was in ecstasies. 'Bring the box round, lad; never mind that villain.'

Willie lifted it, but on feeling the weight, 'No, no,' he replied, dropping it quickly, 'he can take it back himself. Lift it up and wade,' he said, 'and if you drop it or try any tricks I'll bray your head into putty.'

'Let me carry it round by the big bridge,' besought the now thoroughly cowed Sandy.

'No, by heaven!' said the other, 'through the burn you go;' and, willing or not, he forced him to ford the current, which a moment after he himself cleared in a running leap.

'What is it all about?' he then found time to ask.

'You've stopped a bit ugly work, I'm thinking,' said Adam, upon whom the full extent of the crime began to dawn, as he dimly recognised the shape, size, and weight of his money-box in the clouded, uncertain light. 'These two have been trying to rob me.'

'Never!' said Willie. 'Kitty, you wouldn't do *that*?'

'Come up and make sure,' said Adam.

With that they all began silently to retrace their steps, only Kitty slipped away in front as if to avoid embarrassing questions.

Willie was very thoughtful. Just as they were coming to the door he said to Adam in a low, troubled voice, which he tried hard to make indifferent, 'Look here, Adam; you haven't lost anything by this row, and there isn't much use in exposing her, is there?'

'No,' was the reply, 'but since they're so fond I'll make them marry and set up house by themselves.' With that they entered the kitchen, where Aleck, all shivering with his bath, deposited the box on the floor. A cheerful firelight showed Kitty, not, as might have been expected, with abashed countenance and the demeanour of a culprit awaiting justice, but with heightened colour and sparkling eyes—far bonnier than ever, as her old lover could not help thinking.

'There's your true blood,' she said to Adam, but pointing to his son, 'and this has been a fine night's work for him. It began with robbing you that's done so much for him; then the sweetheart that liked him so well as to run away with him he left on the wrong side of the burn; and then to draw his knife on an honest man! You'll never seek to make me wed him now?'

'That you shall, you shameless hussy,' broke out her uncle. 'You're not fit for Allan, and I'm sure from what I've seen this night he wouldn't look at a thief.'

'No, I couldn't do that,' said Willie; 'but there's no need for me here,' and with a sad and regretful countenance he was about to leave when he was stopped by a burst of mischievous laughter from the impenitent but bewitching culprit.

'It's Bet's box,' she said.

'Bet's box!' said Aleck; and 'Bet's box!' echoed Adam and Willie.

'Aye, Bet's box,' said Kitty.

'Sure enough it's not my box,' said the uncle, dragging it into the light; 'it's the same size, but not the colour. But whatever is making it so heavy?'

That was soon discovered. The red-headed servant-girl came forward with a smile on her gaping mouth that suggested the part she had taken in the trick. 'There's a stone of shot,' she said, 'and there's the horseshoes from the backyard, and there's the rusty keys that used to lie in the stable, and here's my old petticoats stuffed in to keep them from jingling, and,' she added, 'the weights and the flat-iron!'

'By George!' said Willie, 'he must have meant to start a pack. Would you have stabbed me to save that dirt?'

'He didn't know what it was,' answered for him Kitty. 'I just

wanted to try his mettle, so I put this box in the room of the other one, and it's back in its place now, neither touched nor opened.'

'I'm glad o' that, lass,' said the old publican, and though there was not much in the words, there was a something in the voice that made them sink deep. 'It would have been a bad day for me when I found you turning against me. But, Willie, lad, if you want to catch this skittish filly, you'd better be quick. Down to the minister's you go to-morrow and get your names asked; and as for you, you lubberly sumph, after making a fool of yourself like that what's to come of you?'

'Marry him to Bet,' suggested Kitty.

'The very ticket!' returned her uncle. 'Will you have him, Bet?'

'Aye, that will I,' said the laconic maid.

'You'll go down to the minister's as well, then,' said Adam to Aleck; 'and now, lass, bring us a drop o' that brandy, and put the kettle on and bring the sugar, and we'll christen the bargain.'

So a few weeks afterwards there were two weddings in Blackford, and when the lads of the village 'roped' Willie Allan he gave them a whole half-sovereign to drink, and was therefore allowed to enter the croft-house with a thunderstorm of cheers; but when they did the same thing to Aleck he morosely cut the rope with a knife, and that is why he has been so unlucky ever since; for if you go to Blackford now you will find the croft-house to be the neatest, prettiest, nicest house there, while ever since old Adam's death, which happened many years ago, the 'Red Lion' has been so squalid and dirty and disreputable, that the Marquis has serious thoughts of taking away the licence and turning it into a butcher's shop.

P. ANDERSON GRAHAM.

‘*La Pêche aux Goujons.*’

TWENTY years ago each poplar that fringed the streams of rural France shaded its gudgeon-fisher. Now, in many districts, the trees have been felled to make room for factories. Will factories also destroy the fishers? This is no frivolous question, but one that might interest the profoundest social philosopher. National pastimes are the index and the school of national character. ‘Sport,’ ‘Hig-life,’ ‘Grand Match au Grand Trot,’ are exotics, carefully nurtured in Paris, but not yet acclimatised in France. It is not in that garish caravansary, where morals, habits, tastes are cosmopolitan, that the natural Frenchman is found. The national pastime is the *pêche aux goujons*; and by it is formed, and in it is most faithfully represented, the best side of the national character.

As gudgeon-fishers, the good people of the provinces learn simplicity in their pleasures, practise frugality and patience, are trained to be content with little, to make the most of everything. Who but gudgeon-fishers would spit a frog, fry a minnow, or roast a wren? But the influence of the sport extends beyond the culinary art: it is social and moral. The French country gentleman is the pedigree gudgeon-fisher. He lives, without display or pretence, the simple frugal life of our forefathers. He maintains no costly staff of gardeners, for he requires no forcing-pits or hot-houses—he is content, as were our ancestors, with a wilderness of inexpensive, hardy flowers; he has no expanse of trimly shaven lawn round his house, but tethers his cows or folds his sheep under his drawing-room windows. If he has a taste for landscape gardening, he cultivates it cheaply by clipping the back of his poodle. He preserves no game, for the Gallic sportsman does not despise the tom-tit, and values the *rouge-gorge* as a prize. He drives the one-horse hooded shay of our grandfathers, drawn by a sturdy animal not unacquainted with the plough. He vies in no ruinous expense with wealthier compatriots at Trouville or *les Eaux*; if he visits Paris he goes as a countryman. The furniture of his house is old, but it has that faded air which is *bien distingué*; he leaves lacquer and novelties to the

parvenus. He does not dress his servants better than himself: he pays no bills for cockades, liveries, or powder; Alphonse is his butler, groom, and gardener.

It is from the *pêche aux goujons* that the rural shopkeeper learnt the motto '*au gagne-petit*' which is the canon of his trade. He apportions his family to his income; his quiver is never so full that he is forced into fraud. His pleasures are domestic; his dissipation is the *café*, where two lumps of sugar give him a keener interest in his game than the bet for which the British shop-boy robs the till. It is the *pêche aux goujons* which taught the peasant to neglect no coign of possible vantage, to utilise every ledge of rock, to cultivate to perfection every barleycorn of soil, to collect the droppings of his cattle as carefully as the gold-seeker sifts sand for ore. Nature is bountiful to him, but he does not squander her largess. He himself, his wife, his cow, his dog, are beasts of draught and of burden; the babe in arms is a herder of flocks and knitter of hose; the puff-ball puppy is trained to guard its master's property; even the animals learn to eat within their tether. As gudgeon-fishers the industrial classes have learnt to live on food which the British pauper throws to the pigs, to fare meagrely and dress cheaply in order to save a farthing. Prodigal of nothing but their labour, sparing of everything but themselves, they toil the live-long day for infinitesimal rewards. If wealth be attained, they neither slacken their exertions nor increase their expenditure. They still don the blouse, whose purple patches are more honourable to them than the gaudy quarterings with which heralds adorn the coats of our successful traders. The women wear their simple caps rather than affect those Parisian novelties which, on the heads of our fellow-countrywomen, are often as grotesque as the embrace bestowed by Titania on the cheek of Bottom. It is wiser to stick to your native garb than, like the unadulterated savage, to clap a cocked-hat on your head, thrust your legs through the arms of a dress-coat, and imagine yourself clad in the fashion.

The national pastime spreads its influence wide and deep. From the *pêche aux goujons* Frenchmen acquire that fecundity of small talk which we grudgingly envy; no Englishman opens his mouth unless he thinks he has hooked a salmon. The facts on which French historians build their edifices are often meagre, but as the *friture* of gudgeons is incomparable, so is their power of generalisation unsurpassed. It is in the national sport that Frenchmen rid themselves of those burdens so grievous to

the English, the personal sense of the ludicrous, and *mauvaise honte*, whether its source is false dignity, self-consciousness, or conceit. Neither can be retained by one who sits on a wall in a public highway, surrounded by a freely criticising crowd, fishing for gudgeon between two barelegged *gamins* more successful than himself. It is this jostling of young and old, rags and respectability, this juxtaposition of the solemn and the trifling, the dignified and the mean, that promotes the kindly feeling of rural classes, keeps the *grand-père* in touch with the *bébé*, and breeds that contempt for appearances which enables Frenchmen to enjoy themselves freely, express emotion unrestrainedly, enter into simple pleasures, and walk in processions without the mien of criminals. Why should the only emotion which the Englishman allows himself to express in public be his ill-temper? To all but gudgeon-fishers there is a ludicrous aspect to the sport. 'César' and 'Minos,' and all the pompous panoply of the Gallic *chasse* are required to massacre a wren; to land a gudgeon the fisherman equips himself with the mast of 'some tall ammiral,' and tackle capable of holding Leviathan himself. In the same way the catmeat man proclaims his wares with the *fanfaronnade* of trumpets which might herald the triumphant entry of a conquering hero, and the man of letters is often as solemnly grandiloquent in his preface as he is insignificant in his sequel. 'By the beard of the Prophet—figs' is an unexpected contrast between peroration and exordium which is rivalled every minute in French real life, and at least every hour in French literature. But natives see no incongruity, for all are at heart and by birth gudgeon-fishers. The prize of the national pastime is small, but the Frenchman knows that life is made up of a *friture* of insignificant pleasures, and that things are really what they seem to their owner. He calls the solitary box-tree in its green tub, by the side of which he takes his coffee, a '*bosquet de verdure*'; he describes his square yard of garden, with its grimy wall, its dusty pear-tree, its miniature bed of dahlias, as a '*vaste jardin d'agrément*'; with childish eagerness he solicits your appreciation of their beauties. To him they are what he says; he prizes them not at their material, but at their relative, value. He has fathomed the true secret of happiness; he is a wiser philosopher than the man who sneers. At least he is no hypocrite, like the Englishman who contemptuously styles his rural palace 'my little bachelor box in the country,' and would be furious if taken at his word.

The taste for gudgeon-fishing is either natural or acquired. It

is not the birthright of Englishmen. To our heroes of the Matterhorn the achievements of the Club Alpin Français in the Vosges or Auvergne appear frivolous. What is true of the English mountaineer is true of the nation generally. But runs for the gudgeon bestow greater happiness on a greater number than ladders for the salmon. Rural France is the home and the school of gudgeon-fishing; yet by most of our fellow-countrymen the art is as forgotten as its home is unfrequented. Every tendency of modern English society is against the acquisition of the craft. To all who are possessed by the unquiet spirits of morbid conscientiousness, the nineteenth century, or ultra-Protestantism; to all who find no pleasure in pursuits unaccompanied by competition or by danger; to all who hope to combat obesity by athletic self-mortification; to all who carry with them their national prejudices; to all who seek in the comparative *abandon* of foreign '*tables d'hôte*' stepping-stones to London society,—we would say, 'Away with their rods! they are impostors!' Complete expatriation is the greatest element in success: the gudgeon-fisher must, so far as he is capable, divest himself of his own nationality in order to appreciate the habits and customs of others. Haste or ill-temper are equally pernicious: sudden jerks draw the delicate bait from the hook, and the mouths of the fish are tender. Patience is indispensable; yet the fisher must be perpetually alert for a nibble and never expect to catch a whale. To minds thus constituted the sport affords that infinity of small pleasures which constitute one infinite delight, and that perfect rest which resembles nothing but the nameless peace of a calm at sea as day dawns. Nothing must be deemed a trifle: even the names of streets are not to be treated as insignificant. The true gudgeon-fisher is prepared to sip honey with the *bourdon blanc*, to caper with the *chèvres qui dansent*, to caracole with the *quatre fils d'Aymon*, to hunt Huguenots in the *rue des Renards*, or make the best of both worlds with the *chapeaux violettes*. A path, deeply worn in the rock, diapered by the sharply cut shadows of the plane-trees that form its meagre avenue, winds up the hill from the river under a ruined feudal tower. The surroundings are peaceful. A wrinkled sibyl, distaff in hand, herds her solitary goat on the scanty grass at its side; a priest, his *soutane* under his arm, his thumb in the half-closed breviary, murmurs his midday prayers as he descends its windings; groups of busy peasant-women come and go; behind is heard the rhythmic fall of the flail, below the sharp rataplan of the bats of the washerwomen. The

true gudgeon-fisher, sitting among the chirruping grasshoppers on the edge of the well-worn path, must be able to call up the past with the present. His contemplations will have something of the airy lightness of a *château en Espagne* and something of the substantiality of a 'compact well-built tenement.' If his interests lie in the remoter past, the dismantled castle will help him to figure to himself the darker side of mediæval life, or the *Hôtel de la Haute Mère Dieu* or *De l'Image*, under whose shelter he has slept, will aid him to realise its softer aspect, when men relied in their journeys on their unseen Protector rather than on the hand of science. If his tastes are more modern, most of the features of rural England of the eighteenth century are before his eyes. The smock is replaced by the blouse; but the hedgeless expanse, diversified by small patches of different crops; the cattle tethered on the turf-balks; the mud-built heath or straw-thatched cottages, gathered together in little groups and marked by tufts of trees; the families, from the grandfather downwards, working together on their plots; the domestic industries of spinning and weaving; the rudely fashioned home-made implements; the musical recitative with which the oxen are encouraged at their labour,—all recall the days when every rood of land maintained its man, and the ploughboy, not the steam-engine, whistled 'o'er the furrowed land.'

But though natural gudgeon-fishers are now rare in England, they may be trained by education. Never did the nation more imperatively need to revive the lost art or practise the forgotten craft. No class in society has escaped the pernicious influence of the pursuit of big game. Wealth becomes every day more concentrated in fewer hands; sport and other pleasures of life are restricted to those who can afford to pay largely for their enjoyment; the matrimonial market is ruined, and the British matron sits woebegone by the stream of life holding her gaff idle in her hands; in their race for riches our shopkeepers have provoked the competition of co-operative stores, and our manufacturers have tarnished their commercial reputation by the substitution of shoddy for broadcloth. It is on the rural squirearchy that the evil consequences have told with most severity. The fall of rents finds them engaged in a ruinous competition which has strained their resources to the utmost. They have no surplus to expend on their estates, no reserve from which to meet a period of distress. The rural frog bursts in the effort to inflate himself to the size of the civic ox. Our landed aristocracy have ceased to repose on

their legacy of centuries—their inherited ease of manner, their established position, their inbred refinement, their hereditary acres, their ancestral tenantry. These things are valueless if they do not enable their owners to despise salmon and fish for gudgeon, to receive their guests in faded drawing-rooms, to drive in antiquated carriages, to wear the same velvet at successive parties, to make a stand against the absurd expenses of fashionable schools, to practise economies that Sir Gorgias Midas dare not attempt. But the landed gentry have surrendered their natural advantages to fight on ground, chosen by their rivals, where their own defeat is inevitable. They engage in a fatal campaign of social expenditure which necessarily throws the lead into the richest hands. The result to themselves and society generally is ruinous. Nothing will save them but gudgeon-fishing. Meanwhile society is no longer headed by an 'aristocracy tempered by epigram,' but by a 'plutocracy modified by accident.' Our new leaders, flung into positions above their education or their hopes, are unfit to enjoy the simpler pleasures of social intercourse. In a display of fireworks they may pass muster: glitter and finery may distract attention from their shortcomings. The result is that an absurd standard of living, measured by the expenses of the wealthiest, has been created, a taste for lavish entertainments stimulated, too fastidious to tolerate plainer fare, and a restless craving for excitement fostered, which revolts against the necessary monotony of a simple life.

It is difficult to put back the social clock; but, when one hand has been forced back, the other must follow, or the machine will go to pieces. Much is talked about 'salmonising' the Thames; what is really wanted is to stock it with gudgeon. Establish an inspector of gudgeon-fisheries in the place of the guardians of our salmon, revive throughout the country the *pêche aux goujons*, and less will be heard of agricultural depression, shoddy manufacturers, paralysis of industry, and more confidence will be felt in the proposed experiment of peasant proprietors.

R. E. PROTHERO.

The Third Time.

I.

IF Harry Lewin had never come to Stoke Peveril, Edie Meredith would certainly have married her cousin Evan.

For Evan Meredith was the sort of man that any girl of Edie's temperament might very easily fall in love with. Tall, handsome, with delicate, clear-cut Celtic face, piercing yet pensive black Welsh eyes, and the true Cymric gifts of music and poetry, Evan Meredith had long been his pretty cousin's prime favourite among all the young men of all Herefordshire. She had danced with him over and over again at every county ball; she had talked with him incessantly at every lawn-tennis match and garden-party; she had whispered to him quietly on the sofa in the far corner while distinguished amateurs were hammering away conscientiously at the grand piano; and all the world of Herefordshire took it for granted that young Mr. Meredith and his second cousin were, in the delightfully vague slang of society, 'almost engaged.'

Suddenly, like a flaming meteor across the quiet evening skies, Harry Lewin burst in all his dashing splendour upon the peaceful and limited Herefordshire horizon. He came from that land of golden possibilities, Australia: but he was Irish by descent, and his father had sent him young to Eton and Oxford, where he picked up the acquaintance of everybody worth knowing, and a sufficient knowledge of things in general to pass with brilliant success in English society. In his vacations, having no home of his own to go to, he had loitered about half the capitals and spas of Europe, so that Vichy and Carlsbad, Monte Carlo and Spezzia, Berlin and St. Petersburg, were almost as familiar to him as London and Scarborough. Nobody knew exactly what his father had been: some said a convict, some a gold-miner, some a bush-ranger; but whatever he was, he was at least exceedingly rich, and money covers a multitude of sins quite as well and as effectually as charity. When Harry Lewin came into his splendid property at his father's death, and purchased the insolvent Lord

Tintern's old estate at Stoke Peveril, half the girls and all the mothers in the whole of Herefordshire rose at once to a fever of anxiety in their desire to know upon which of the marriageable young women of the county the wealthy new-comer would finally bestow himself in holy matrimony.

There was only one girl in the Stoke district who never appeared in the slightest degree flattered or fluttered by Harry Lewin's polite attentions, and that girl was Edie Meredith. Though she was only the country doctor's daughter—'hardly in our set at all, you know,' the county people said depreciatingly—she had no desire to be the mistress of Peveril Court, and she let Harry Lewin see pretty clearly that she didn't care the least in the world for that distinguished honour.

It was at a garden party at Stoke Peveril Rectory that Edie Meredith met one afternoon her cousin Evan and the rich young Irish-Australian. Harry Lewin had stood talking to her with his easy jaunty manner, so perfectly self-possessed, so full of Irish courtesy and Etonian readiness, when Evan Meredith, watching them half angrily out of his dark Welsh eyes from the corner by the laburnum-tree, walked slowly over to interrupt their *tête-à-tête* of set purpose. He chose certainly an awkward moment: for his earnest serious face and figure showed to ill advantage just then and there beside the light-hearted cheery young Oxonian's. Edie fancied as he strolled up to her that she had never seen her cousin Evan look so awkward, so countrified, and so awfully Welsh. (On the border counties, to look like a Welshman is of course almost criminal.) She wondered she had overlooked till now the fact that his was distinctly a local and rustic sort of handsomeness. He looked like a Herefordshire squireen gentleman, while Harry Lewin, with his Irish chivalry and his Oxford confidence, looked like a cosmopolitan and a man of society.

As Evan came up, glancing blackly at him from under his dark eyebrows, Harry Lewin moved away carelessly, raising his hat and strolling off as if quite unconcerned, to make way for the new-comer. Evan nodded to him a distant nod, and then turned to his cousin Edie.

'You've been talking a great deal with that fellow Lewin,' he said sharply, almost angrily, glancing straight at her with his big black eyes.

Edie was annoyed at the apparent assumption of a right to criticise her. 'Mr. Lewin's a very agreeable man,' she answered quietly, without taking the least notice of his angry tone. 'I

always like to have a chat with him, Evan. He's been everywhere and knows all about everything—Paris and Vienna, and I don't know where. So very different, of course, from our Stoke young men, who've never been anywhere in their whole lives beyond Bristol or Hereford.'

'Bristol and Hereford are much better places, I've no doubt, for a man to be brought up in than Paris or Vienna,' Evan Meredith retorted hastily, the hot blood flushing up at once into his dusky cheek. 'But as you seem to be so very much taken up with your new admirer, Edie, I'm sure I'm very sorry I happened at such an unpropitious moment to break in upon your conversation.'

'So am I,' Edie answered, quietly and with emphasis.

She hardly meant it, though she was vexed with Evan; but Evan took her immediately at her word. Without another syllable he raised his hat, turned upon his heel, and left her standing there alone, at some little distance from her mother, by the edge of the oval grass-plot. It was an awkward position for a girl to be left in—for everybody would have seen that Evan had retired in high dudgeon—had not Harry Lewin promptly perceived it, and with quiet tact managed to return quite casually to her side, and walk back with her to her mother's protection, so as to hide at once her confusion and her blushes. As for Evan, he wandered off moodily by himself among the lilacs and arbutus bushes of the lower shrubbery.

He had been pacing up and down there alone for half an hour or more, nursing his wrath and jealousy in his angry heart, when he saw between the lilac branches on the upper walk the flash of Edie's pretty white dress, followed behind at a discreet distance by the rustle of Mrs. Meredith's black satin. Edie was walking in front with Harry Lewin, and Mrs. Meredith, attempting vainly to affect a becoming interest in the rector's conversation, was doing the proprieties at twenty paces.

As they passed, Evan Meredith heard Harry Lewin's voice murmuring something in a soft, gentle, persuasive flow, not a word of which he could catch individually, though the general accent and intonation showed him at once that Harry was pleading earnestly with his cousin Edie. Evan could have written her verses—pretty enough verses, too—by the foolscap ream; but though he had the Welsh gift of rhyme, he hadn't the Irish gift of fluency and eloquence; and he knew in his own heart that he could never have poured forth to any woman such a

steady, long, impassioned flood of earnest solicitation as Harry Lewin was that moment evidently pouring forth to his cousin Edie. He held his breath in silent expectation, and waited ten whole endless seconds—a long eternity—to catch the tone of Edie's answer.

Instead of the mere tone, he caught distinctly the very words of that low soft musical reply. Edie murmured after a slight pause: 'No, no, Mr. Lewin, I must not—I cannot. I do not love you.'

Evan Meredith waited for no more. He knew partly from that short but ominous pause, and still more from the half-hearted, hesitating way in which the nominal refusal was faintly spoken, that his cousin Edie would sooner or later accept his rival. He walked away, fiercely indignant, and going home, sat down to his desk, and wrote at white-heat an angry letter, beginning simply 'Edith Meredith,' in which he released her formally and unconditionally from the engagement which both of them declared had never existed.

Whether his letter expedited Harry Lewin's wooing or not, it is at least certain that in the end Evan Meredith's judgment was approved by the result; and before the next Christmas came round again, Edie was married to Harry Lewin, and duly installed as mistress of Peveril Court.

II.

The first three months of Edie Lewin's married life passed away happily and pleasantly. Harry was always kindness itself to her; and as she saw more of him, she found in him what she had not anticipated, an unsuspected depth and earnestness of purpose. She had thought him at first a brilliant, dashing, clever Irishman; she discovered upon nearer view that he had something more within him than mere showy external qualities. He was deeply in love with her: he respected and admired her: and in the midst of all his manly chivalry of demeanour towards his wife there was a certain indefinable air of self-restraint and constant watchfulness over his own actions which Edie noticed with some little wifely pride and pleasure. She had not married a mere handsome rich young fellow; she had married a man of character and determination.

About three months after their marriage Harry Lewin was called away for the first time to leave his bride. An unexpected letter from his lawyer in London—immediate business—those

bothering Australian shares and companies! Would Edie forgive him? He would run up for the day only, starting early and getting back late the same night. It's a long run from Stoke to London, but you can just manage it if you fit your trains with dexterous ingenuity. So Harry went, and Edie was left alone, for the first time in her life, in the big rooms of Peveril Court for a whole day.

That very afternoon Evan Meredith and his father happened to call. It was Evan's first visit to the bride, for he couldn't somehow make up his mind to see her earlier. He was subdued, silent, constrained, regretful, but he said nothing in allusion to the past—nothing but praise of the Peveril Court grounds, the beauty of the house, the charm of the surroundings, the magnificence of the old Romneys and Sir Joshuas.

'You have a lovely place, Edie,' he said, hesitating a second before he spoke the old familiar name, but bringing it out quite naturally at last. 'And your husband? I hope I may have the—the pleasure of seeing him again.'

Edie coloured. 'He has gone up to town to-day,' she answered simply.

'By himself?'

'By himself, Evan.'

Evan Meredith coughed uneasily, and looked at her with a silent look which said more plainly than words could have said it, 'Already!'

'He will be back this evening,' Edie went on apologetically, answering aloud his unspoken thought. 'I—I'm sorry he isn't here to see you, Evan.'

'I'm sorry too, very sorry,' Evan answered with a half-stifled sigh. He didn't mean to let her see the ideas that were passing through his mind; but his quick, irrepressible Celtic nature allowed the internal emotions to peep out at once through the thin cloak of that conventionally polite expression of regret. Edie knew he meant he was very sorry that Harry should have gone away so soon and left her.

That evening, about ten o'clock, as Edie, sitting alone in the blue drawing-room, was beginning to wonder when Harry's dog-cart would be heard rolling briskly up the front avenue, there came a sudden double rap at the front door, and the servant brought in a sealed telegram. Edie tore it open with some misgiving. It was not from Harry. She read it hastily: 'From Proprietor, Norton's Hotel, Jermyn Street, London, to Mrs. Lewin, Peveril Court, Stoke Peveril, Herefordshire. Mr. Lewin

unfortunately detained in town by urgent business. He will not be able to return before to-morrow.'

Edie laid down the telegram with a sinking heart. In itself there was nothing so very strange in Harry's being detained by business; men are always being detained by business; she knew it was a way they had, a masculine peculiarity. But why had not Harry telegraphed himself? Why had he left the proprietor of Norton's Hotel to telegraph for him? Why was he at Norton's Hotel at all? And if he really was there, why could he not have written the telegram himself? It was very mysterious, perplexing, and inexplicable. Tears came into Edie's eyes, and she sat long looking at the flimsy pink Government paper, as if the mere inspection of the hateful message would help her to make out the meaning of the enclosed mystery.

Soon the question began to occur to her, What should she do for the night's arrangements? Peveril Court was so big and lonely; she hated the idea of stopping there alone. Should she have out the carriage and drive round to spend the night as of old at her mother's? But no; it was late, and the servants would think it so very odd of her. People would talk about it; they would say Harry had stopped away from her unexpectedly, and that she had gone back in a pique to her own home. Young wives, she knew, are always doing those foolish things, and always regretting them afterwards when they find the whole county magnifying the molehill into a veritable mountain. Much as she dreaded it, she must spend the night alone in that big bedroom—the haunted bedroom where the last of the Peverils died. Poor little Edie! with her simple, small, village ways, she hated that great rambling house, and all its halls and staircases and corridors! But there was no help for it. She went tearfully up to her own room, and flung herself without undressing on the great bed with the heavy crimson tapestry hangings.

There she lay all night, tossing and turning, crying and wondering, dozing off at times and starting up again fitfully, but never putting out the candles on the dressing-table, which had burned away deep in the sockets by the time morning began to peep through the grey Venetians of the east window.

III.

Next morning Evan Meredith heard accidentally that Harry Lewin had stopped for the night in London, and had telegraphed unexpectedly to Edie that he had been detained in town on business.

Evan shook his head with an ominous look. 'Poor child,' he said to himself pityingly; 'she *would* marry a man who had been brought up in Paris and Vienna!'

And when Harry came back that evening by the late train, Evan Meredith was loitering casually by the big iron gates of Peveril Court to see whether Edie's husband was really returning.

There was a very grave and serious look on Harry's face that surprised and somewhat disconcerted Evan. He somehow felt that Harry's expression was not that of a careless, dissipated fellow, and he said to himself, this time a little less confidently: 'Perhaps after all I may have been misjudging him.'

Edie was standing to welcome her husband on the big stone steps of the old manor house. He stepped from the dogcart, not lightly with a spring as was his usual wont, but slowly and almost remorsefully, like a man who has some evil tidings to break to those he loves dearest. But he kissed Edie as tenderly as ever—even more tenderly, she somehow imagined; and he looked at her with such a genuine look of love that Edie thought it was well worth while for him to go away for the sake of such a delightful meeting.

'Well, darling,' she asked, as she went with him into the great dining-room, 'why didn't you come back to the little wife, as you promised yesterday?'

Harry looked her full in the face, not evasively or furtively, but with a frank, open glance, and answered in a very quiet voice, 'I was detained on business, Edie.'

'What business?' Edie asked, a little piqued at the indefiniteness of the answer.

'Business that absolutely prevented me from returning,' Harry replied, with a short air of perfect determination.

Edie tried in vain to get any further detail out of him. To all her questions Harry only answered with the one set and unaltered formula, 'I was detained on important business.'

But when she had asked him for the fiftieth time in the drawing-room that evening, he said at last, not at all angrily, but very seriously, 'It was business, Edie, closely connected with your own happiness. If I had returned last night, you would have been sorry for it, sooner or later. I stayed away for your own sake, darling. Please ask me no more about it.'

Edie couldn't imagine what he meant; but he spoke so seriously, and smoothed her hand with such a tender, loving gesture, that she kissed him fervently, and brushed away the

tears from her swimming eyes without letting him see them. As for Harry, he sat long looking at the embers in the smouldering fire, and holding his pretty little wife's hand tight in his without uttering a single syllable. At last, just as they were rising to go upstairs, he laid his hand upon the mantelpiece as if to steady himself, and said very earnestly, 'Edie, with God's help, I hope it shall never occur again.'

'What, Harry darling? What do you mean? What will never occur again?'

He paused a moment. 'That I should be compelled to stop a night away from you unexpectedly,' he answered then very slowly.

And when he had said it he took up the candle from the little side table and walked away, with two tears standing in his eyes, to his own dressing-room.

From that day forth Edie Lewin noticed two things. First, that her husband seemed to love her even more tenderly and deeply than ever. And second, that his strange gravity and self-restraint seemed to increase daily upon him.

And Evan Meredith, watching closely his cousin and her husband, thought to himself with a glow of satisfaction—for he was too generous and too true in his heart to wish ill to his rival—'After all, he loves her truly; he is really in love with her. Edie will be rich now, and will have a good husband. What could I ever have given her compared to what Harry Lewin can give her? It is better so. I must not regret it.'

IV.

For five or six months more, life passed as usual at Peveril Court, or at Harry Lewin's new town house in Curzon Street, Mayfair. The season came and went pleasantly enough, with its round of dances, theatres, and dinners; and in the autumn Edie Lewin found herself once more back for the shooting in dear old Herefordshire. Harry was always by her side, the most attentive and inseparable of husbands; he seemed somehow to cling to her passionately, as if he could not bear to be out of her sight for a single moment. Edie noticed it, and felt grateful for his love. Evan Meredith noticed it too, and reproached himself bitterly more than once that he should ever so unworthily have distrusted the man who had been brought up in Paris and Vienna.

One day, however, Harry had ridden from Stoke to Hereford, for the exercise alone, and Edie expected him back to dinner. But at half past seven, just as the gong in the hall was burrr-ing

loudly, a telegram arrived once more for Mrs. Lewin, which Edie tore open with trembling fingers. It was almost exactly the same mystifying message over again, only this time it was sent by Harry himself, not by an unknown hotel-keeping deputy. 'I have been suddenly detained here by unexpected business. Do not expect me home before to-morrow. Shall return as early as possible. God bless you!'

Those last words, so singular in a telegram, roused and accentuated all Edie's womanly terrors. 'God bless you!'—what on earth could Harry mean by that solemn adjuration under such strange and mysterious circumstances? There was something very serious the matter, Edie felt sure; but what it could be she could not even picture to herself. Her instinctive fears did not take that vulgarly mistrustful form that they might have taken with many a woman of lower and more suspicious nature; she knew and trusted Harry far too well for that; she was too absolutely certain of his whole unshaken love and tenderness; but the very vagueness and indefiniteness of the fears she felt made them all the harder and more terrible to bear. When you don't know what it is you dread, your fancy can dress up its terrors afresh every moment in some still more painful and distressing disguise.

If Harry had let her know where he was stopping, she would have ordered the carriage then and there, and driven over to Hereford, not to spy him out, but to be with him in his trouble or difficulty. That, however, was clearly impossible, for Harry had merely sent his telegram as from 'H. Lewin, Hereford;' and to go about from hotel to hotel through the county town, inquiring whether her husband was staying there, would of course have been open to the most ridiculous misinterpretation. Everybody would have said she was indeed keeping a tight hand upon him! So with many bitter tears brushed hastily away, Edie went down in solemn and solitary state to dinner, hating herself for crying so foolishly, and burning hot with the unpleasant consciousness that the butler and footman were closely observing her face and demeanour. If she could have dined quite alone in her own boudoir very furtively it wouldn't have been quite so dreadful; but to keep up appearances with a sinking heart before those two eminently respectable and officious men-servants—it was really enough to choke one.

That night again Edie Lewin never slept for more than a few troubled minutes together; and whenever she awoke, it was with a start and a scream, and a vague consciousness of some impending evil.

When Harry came again next day he didn't laugh it off carelessly and lightly; he didn't soothe her fears and uneasiness with ready kisses and prompt excuses; he didn't get angry with her and tell her not to ask him too many questions about his own business: he met her as gravely and earnestly as before, with the same tender, loving, half self-reproachful tone, and yet with the same evident desire and intention to love and cherish her more fondly than ever. Edie was relieved, but she was by no means satisfied. She knew Harry loved her tenderly, devotedly; but she knew also there was some sort of shadow or secret looming ominously between them.

Another wife, supposed dead? He would have trusted her and told her. Another love? Oh no; she could trust him; it was impossible.

And so the weeks wore away, and Edie wondered all to no purpose. At last, by dint of constant wondering, she almost wore out the faculty of wonder, and half ceased to think about it any longer.

But she noticed that from day to day the old bright, brilliant Irish character was slowly fading out of Harry's nature, and that in its place there was growing up a settled, noble, not unbecoming earnestness. He seemed perhaps a trifle less striking and attractive than formerly, but a great deal worthier of any true woman's enduring love and admiration.

Evan Meredith noticed the change as well. He and Harry had grown now into real friends. Harry saw and recognised the genuine depth of Evan's nature. Evan had made amends and apologies to Harry for a single passing rudeness or two. Both liked the other better for the momentary rivalry and for the way he had so soon forgotten it. 'He's a good fellow,' Evan said to his father often, 'and Edie, with her quiet, simple English nature, has made quite another man of him—given him the ballast and the even steadiness he once wanted.'

V.

Spring came, and then summer; and with summer, the annual visitation of garden parties. The Trenches at Malbury Manor were going to give a garden party, and Harry and Edie drove across to it. Edie took her husband over in the pony-carriage with the two little greys she loved so well to drive herself: the very prettiest and best-matched ponies, everybody said, in the whole county of Hereford.

As they walked about on the lawn together, they met Edie's father and mother. Somehow, Edie happened to fasten herself

accidentally upon her mother, while Harry strolled away alone, and stood talking with something of his old brilliancy to one group or another of loungers independently. For awhile, Edie missed him; he had gone off to look at the conservatories or something. Then, she saw him chatting with Canon Wilmington and his daughters over by one of the refreshment tables, and handing them champagne cup and ices, while he talked with unusual volubility and laughter. Presently he came up to her again, and to her great surprise said, with a yawn, 'Edie, this is getting dreadfully slow. I can't stand it any longer. I think I shall just slip away quietly and walk home; you can come after me whenever you like with the ponies! Good-bye till dinner. God bless you, darling!'

It wasn't a usual form of address with him, and Edie vaguely noted it in passing, but thought nothing more about the matter after the first moment. 'Good-bye, Harry,' she said, laughingly. 'Perhaps Evan will see me home. Good-bye.'

Harry smiled rather sadly. 'Evan has ridden over on one of my cobs,' he answered quietly, 'and so I suppose he'll have to ride back again.'

'He's the best fellow that ever lived,' Evan said, as Harry turned away with a friendly nod. 'Upon my word, I'm quite ashamed of the use I make of your husband's stables, Edie.'

'Nonsense, Evan; we're always both delighted whenever you will use anything of ours as if it were your own.'

At six o'clock the ponies were stopping the way, and Edie prepared to drive home alone. She took the bye-road at the back of the grounds in preference to the turnpike, because it wouldn't be so crowded or so dusty for her to drive upon.

They had gone about a mile from the house, and had passed the Beehive, where a group of half-tipsy fellows was loitering upon the road outside the tavern, when a few hundred yards further Edie suddenly checked the greys for no immediately apparent reason.

'Got a stone in his hoof, ma'am?' the groom asked, looking down curiously at the off horse, and preparing to alight for the expected emergency.

'No,' Edie answered with a sudden shake of her head. 'Look there, William! On the road in front of us! What a disgusting brute! I nearly ran over him.'

The groom looked in the direction where Edie pointed with her whip, and saw lying on the ground, straight before the horses' heads, a drunken man, asleep and helpless, with a small pocket flask clasped in his hand, quite empty.

‘Pick him up!’ Edie said in a tone of disgust. ‘Carry him over and lay him on the side of the road there, will you, William?’

The man went off to do as he was directed. At that very moment, Evan Meredith, coming up from behind on Harry’s cob, called out lightly, ‘Can I help you, Edie? What’s the matter? Ho! One of those beastly fellows from the Beehive yonder. Hold a minute, William, you’ve got a regular job there—more than an armful. Drunken men are heavy to carry. Wait a bit, and I’ll come and help you.’

He rode forward to the groom’s side just as the groom raised in his arms the drunkard’s head and exposed to view his down-turned face. Then, with a sudden cry of horror and pity, Evan Meredith, not faltering for a moment, drove his heel into his horse’s flank, and rode off, speechless with conflicting emotions, leaving Edie there alone, face to face with her fallen husband.

It was Harry Lewin.

Apoplexy? Epilepsy? An accident? A sunstroke? No, no. Edie could comfort herself with none of those instantaneous flashes of conjecture, for his face and his breath would alone have told the whole story, even if the empty flask in his drunken hand had not at once confirmed the truth of her first apprehension. She sat down beside him on the green roadside, buried her poor face in her trembling hands, and cried silently, silently, silently, for twenty minutes.

The groom, standing motionless officially beside her, let her tears have free vent, and knew not what to say or do under such extraordinary and unprecedented circumstances.

One thing only Edie thought once or twice in the midst of that awful blinding discovery. Thank God that Evan Meredith had not stopped there to see her misery and degradation. An Englishman might have remained like a fool, with the clumsy notion of assisting her in her trouble, and getting him safely home to Peveril Court for her. Evan, with his quick Welsh perception, had seen in a second that the only possible thing for her own equals to do on such an occasion was to leave her alone with her unspeakable wretchedness.

After a while, she came to a little, by dint of crying and pure exhaustion, and began to think that something must at least be done to hide this terrible disgrace from the prying eyes of all Herefordshire.

She rose mechanically, without a word, and motioning the groom to take the feet, she lifted Harry’s head—her own husband’s head—that drunken wretch’s head—great heavens, which was

it? and helped to lay him silently on the floor of the pony carriage. He was helpless and motionless as a baby. Her eyes were dry now, and she hardly even shuddered. She got into the carriage again, covered over the breathing mass of insensible humanity at the bottom with her light woollen wrapper, and drove on in perfect silence till she reached Peveril Court. As she drew up in front of the door, the evening was beginning to close in rapidly. The groom, still silent, jumped from the carriage, and ran up the steps with his usual drilled accuracy to ring the bell. Edie beckoned to him imperiously with her hand to stop and come back to her. He paused, and turned down the steps again to hear what she wished. Edie's lips were dry; she couldn't utter a word, but she pointed mutely to her husband's prostrate form, and the groom understood at once that she wished him to lift Harry out of the carriage. Hastily and furtively they carried him in at the library door—the first room inside the house, and there they laid him out upon the sofa, Edie putting one white finger passionately on her lip to enjoin silence. As soon as that was done, she sat down to the table with marvellous resolution, and wrote out a cheque for 20*l.* from her own cheque-book. Then at last she found speech with difficulty. 'William,' she said, her dry husky throat almost choking with the effort, 'take that, instead of notice. Go away at once—I'll drive you to the station—go to London, and never say a single word of this to any one.'

William touched his hat in silence, and walked back slowly to the carriage. Edie, now flushed and feverish, but dry of lips and erect of mien, turned the key haughtily in the door, and stalked out to the greys once more. Silently still she drove to the station, and saw William take the London train. 'You shall have a character,' she said, very quietly; 'write to me for it. But never say a word of this for your life to anybody.'

William touched his hat once more, and went away, meaning conscientiously in his own soul to keep this strange and unexpected compact.

Then Edie drove herself back to Peveril Court, feeling that only Evan Meredith knew besides; and she could surely count at least on Evan's honour.

But to-morrow! to-morrow! what could she ever do to-morrow?

Hot and tearless still, she rang the drawing-room bell. 'Mr. Lewin will not be home to-night,' she said, with no further word of explanation. 'I shall not dine. Tell Watkins to bring me a cup of tea in my own bedroom.'

The maid brought it, and Edie drank it. It moistened her

lips and broke the fever. Then she flung herself passionately upon the bed, and cried, and cried, and cried, wildly, till late in the evening.

Eleven o'clock came. Twelve o'clock. One. She heard them tolling out from the old clock-tower, clanging loudly from the church steeple, clinking and tinkling from all the timepieces in all the rooms of Peveril Court. But still she lay there, and wept, and sobbed, and thought of nothing. She didn't even figure it or picture it to herself; her grief and shame and utter abasement were too profound for mind to fathom. She only felt in a dim, vague, half-unconscious fashion that Harry—the Harry she had loved and worshipped—was gone from her for ever and ever.

In his place, there had come that irrational, speechless, helpless Thing that lay below, breathing heavily in its drunken sleep, on the library sofa.

VI.

By half-past one the lights had long been out in all the rooms, and perfect silence reigned throughout the household. Impelled by a wild desire to see him once more, even though she loathed him, Edie took a bedroom candle in her hand, and stole slowly down the big staircase.

Loathed him? Loved him—ay, loved him even so. Loved him, and the more she loved him, the more utterly loathed him.

If it had been any lesser or lower man, she might have forgiven him. But *him*—Harry—it was too unspeakable.

Creeping along the passage to the library door, she paused and listened. Inside, there was a noise of footsteps, pacing up and down the room hurriedly. He had come to himself, then! He had slept off his drunken helplessness! She paused and listened again to hear further.

Harry was stalking to and fro across the floor with fiery eagerness, sobbing bitterly to himself, and pausing every now and then with a sort of sudden spasmodic hesitation. From time to time she heard him mutter aloud, 'She must have seen me! She must have seen me! They will tell her, they will tell her! Oh, God! they will tell her!'

Should she unlock the door, and fling herself wildly into his arms? Her instinct told her to do it, but she faltered and hesitated. A drunkard! a drunkard! Oh, no! she could not. The evil genius conquered the good, and she checked the impulse that alone could have saved her.

She crept up again, with heart standing still and failing within her, and flung herself once more upon her own bed.

Two o'clock. Three. Half-past three. A quarter to four.

How long the night seems when you are watching and weeping!

Suddenly, at the quarter-hour just gone, a sharp ring at a bell disturbed her lethargy—a ring two or three times repeated, which waked the butler from his sound slumber.

Eddie walked out cautiously to the top of the stairs and listened. The butler stood at the library door and knocked in vain. Eddie heard a letter pushed under the door, and in a muffled voice heard Harry saying, 'Give that letter to your mistress, Hardy—tomorrow morning.'

A vague foreboding of evil overcame her. She stole down the stairs in the blank dark and took the letter without a word from the half-dressed and wondering butler. Then she glided back to her own room, sat down eagerly by the dressing-table, and began to read it.

'EDIE,

'This is the third time, and I determined with myself that the third time should be the last one. Once in London; once at Hereford; once now. I can stand it no longer. My father died a drunkard. My mother died a drunkard. I cannot resist the temptation. It is better I should not stop here. I have tried hard, but I am beaten in the struggle. I loved you dearly: I love you still far too much to burden your life by my miserable presence. I have left you everything. Evan will make you happier than I could. Forgive me.

'HARRY.'

She dropped the letter with a scream, and almost would have fainted.

But even before the faintness could wholly overcome her, another sound rang out sharper and clearer far from the room below her. It brought her back to herself immediately. It was the report of a pistol.

Eddie and the butler hurried back in breathless suspense to the library door. It was locked still. Eddie took the key from her pocket and turned it quickly. When they entered, the candles on the mantelpiece were burning brightly, and Harry Lewin's body, shot through the heart, lay in a pool of gurgling blood right across the spattered hearthrug.

J. ARBUTHNOT WILSON,

How Actors Fared in the Reign of Terror.

SHORTLY after the outbreak of the Revolution, the union which had hitherto existed among the members of that time-honoured institution the Comédie Française was interrupted by internal dissensions arising from the conflicting political opinions of the little community. A small but influential minority of the leading artists, Talma, Dugazon, and Madame Vestris at their head, having enthusiastically adopted the Republican ideas of the day in opposition to the rest of their colleagues, whose Royalist principles remained unshaken, the fraternal harmony which had so long reigned in the 'house of Molière' was at an end, and scarcely a week passed without a fresh display of animosity between the contending parties. The production of Chénier's 'Charles the Ninth' only served to fan the flame; each performance of this work, extolled to the skies by some and contemptuously decried by others, was the signal for renewed hostilities; until at length matters came to an open rupture, and the malcontents, throwing off their allegiance, retired in a body from the company and established themselves in what had formerly been the Variétés Amusantes (the site of the present Théâtre Français), leaving their opponents in possession of the field.

The situation of the remaining members of the corps was highly critical, regarded as they were with suspicion by the authorities, and constantly exposed to the undisguised hatred of Robespierre, who, in a sitting of the Jacobin Club, stigmatised the Théâtre Français as 'the disgusting resort of the aristocracy, and an insult to the Revolution.' According to the terms of a decree issued by the Convention, they were obliged to comply with certain conditions arbitrarily imposed on them, one of which was sufficiently absurd—namely, the suppression, wherever they occurred, of the words 'monsieur,' 'madame,' and 'monseigneur,' and the substitution in their place of 'citoyen' and 'citoyenne'; the effect of this transformation, when the piece happened to be in

verse, being indescribably ludicrous. They were, moreover, greatly embarrassed by the sudden departure of their colleagues, and the consequent difficulty of varying their performances so as to attract the public. The appearance, therefore, of a new author in the person of Jean Louis Laya, and his offer of a semi-comedy, semi-drama, exactly suited to their requirements, and entitled '*L'Ami des Lois*,' were hailed by them with enthusiasm, and the welcome novelty was immediately put into rehearsal. The idea of a bitter and transparent satire directed against the democratic party was a bold one, and on that very account precisely met the views of the managing committee. Every one recognised Robespierre in '*Nomophage*' and Marat in '*Duricrane*,' and the first representation of '*L'Ami des Lois*' was greeted with shouts of applause from an audience almost entirely composed of anti-revolutionists, by whom the slightest allusion to current events was eagerly taken up and frantically cheered. On their side, the Jacobins were not idle: the orators of the different sections, one after another, violently denounced the piece as reactionary and dangerous to the public safety; and, acting on its own responsibility, the Commune published a decree prohibiting a repetition of the 'scandal,' a copy of which was forwarded to the theatre when the doors had been already opened and the spectators were impatiently awaiting the rising of the curtain.

No sooner had its contents been communicated to the audience, and the compulsory withdrawal of '*L'Ami des Lois*' announced, than cries of indignation arose from all parts of the house, loudly protesting against the tyranny of the Commune, and with one accord insisting on the immediate performance of the piece. In vain the Commissary of Police attempted to enforce silence; his voice was inaudible amid the increasing tumult, and even the report that a troop of soldiers were on their march to compel the instant evacuation of the theatre failed to make the slightest impression on the exasperated crowd. At length Chambon, the Mayor of Paris, summoned in haste to exert his authority in maintaining order, consented to refer the matter to the Assembly then sitting; and despatched a message to the President, accompanied by an energetic protest from Laya, the result of which was that on the motion of the deputy Kersaint the interference of the Commune was voted irregular, and full liberty was given to the actors to continue the representations of '*L'Ami des Lois*.'

Their triumph, however, was of short duration; the production of '*Paméla*,' a comedy adapted from Richardson's novel by François

de Neufchâteau, furnished a plausible excuse for fresh persecutions on the plea that its avowed tendencies were aristocratic, and therefore unpatriotic and injurious to the public weal. The ultra-demagogues, who had by this time acquired a certain preponderance in the councils of the national assembly, succeeded in obtaining a decree prohibiting the piece, the execution of which, however, was deferred owing to the withdrawal by the author of some half a dozen lines more or less liable to misconstruction. Such quasi-toleration was far from satisfying the Jacobins, who, determined to bring matters to an issue, caused a notice to be printed at the foot of the bills announcing the next performance of 'Paméla,' to the effect that by order of the municipality no one was to be admitted into the theatre armed with swords, sticks, or any other 'offensive weapon.' This, although ostensibly a warning, was in reality intended by its framers as a hint to their own partisans that a disturbance was likely to occur; and the actors, who saw through the manoeuvre, were naturally by no means at their ease. The scene that ensued has been graphically described as follows by the 'Lord Bonfil' of the evening, the excellent comedian Fleury.

'We were all on the stage, uncertain whether to commence or not, and fancying that on the other side of the curtain a revolutionary committee was waiting to pronounce judgment on us. We longed to ascertain what kind of audience we had to expect, but for some time no one ventured to satisfy his curiosity. At last St. Fal, no longer able to restrain his impatience, approached the *trou du rideau*, and started back in amazement. "Look," he said to me; "if those yonder are *sans-culottes*, they are not so black as they are painted." I looked, and to my great relief beheld row after row of orderly and well-dressed spectators, and a fair show of ladies in the boxes; in short, as reassuring a spectacle as we could possibly desire. One individual alone excited my suspicions; he occupied a seat in the balcony, and from his general appearance and the contemptuously insolent air with which he glanced round the house, I felt sure that he was there with a definite object, and set him down at once as an emissary of the "Mountain"; nor, as will be seen, was I wrong.

'The piece began, and during the early scenes went smoothly enough; never had the charming Mlle. Lange displayed a more enchanting grace, a more touching sensibility. The perfection of her acting inspired us all, and I had almost forgotten the presence of the man in the balcony, when a chance allusion to

hereditary nobility drew from him a movement of angry disapproval, which, however, passed almost unnoticed, except by Dazincourt and myself. It was evident to us that the attentive and sympathetic attitude of the spectators as the piece proceeded tried his patience sorely, and that he only awaited an opportunity of protesting against the applause, which grated on his ear. This soon came; after the words spoken by Dazincourt, "tolerance is preferable to persecution," he half rose from his seat with a menacing gesture, then paused, until, looking him defiantly in the face, I had added, "All honest men must be of that opinion."

"At this his rage knew no bounds. "No!" he shouted; "this is insupportable! Those lines have been already struck out and forbidden."

"On the contrary, monsieur," I replied. "Every word of my part has been examined and authorised by the Committee of Public Safety. Is it your wish, messieurs," I went on, turning from him and addressing the audience, "that the piece should continue, or are we to drop the curtain?"

"Go on!" exclaimed a hundred voices, exasperated by the interruption. "We want no *cabaleurs* here."

"The democrat of the balcony still held his ground. "You hope to curry favour with the Moderate Party," he cried at the top of his voice. "The piece is an attack on the Revolution!"

'Before he could say another word a roar of indignation burst from every side of the house, and the offender, cowed by so unequivocal a demonstration of hostility, stood for a moment irresolute; then, probably judging discretion to be the better part of valour, quietly disappeared, and the last performance of "Paméla" came triumphantly to a close.'

In the interval between the first and second piece it was rumoured that, on leaving the theatre, the ex-occupant of the balcony had gone straight to the Jacobin Club, and had denounced the Comédie Française as a nest of aristocrats, bent on disseminating ideas directly opposed to the principles of the Revolution; and the report was soon confirmed by the tidings that a detachment of *gendarmerie* was on its way to arrest the leading members of the company. The majority of the audience, alarmed for their own safety, beat a hasty retreat; but a few still remained to applaud the courage of the actors, who had unanimously resolved that nothing short of absolute compulsion should induce them to abandon their post before the full accomplishment of their programme. Much to their surprise, they were allowed to finish the

performance without interruption, nor was any obstacle thrown in the way of their subsequently returning to their homes. The respite, however, was brief. Late on the following evening (September 3) the entire company, denounced by a meeting of the Jacobins, were arrested by order of the Commune, the actresses being conducted to Ste. Pélagie and their male colleagues incarcerated in the prison of the Madelonnettes.

The locality selected for the temporary abode of the comedians was originally destined for the reception of criminals of the lowest grade, and the space it occupied was barely sufficient to contain two hundred persons. Owing, however, to the multitude of arrests this number had of late been considerably augmented, and on the arrival of the new-comers no less than three hundred 'suspects' were congregated together within its walls. In each room, or rather cell, measuring at most five feet square, eight individuals were closely packed; the ceilings were so low that a man of middle height could easily touch them, and the only breath of air that penetrated into the interior filtered through a narrow and strongly barred and grated window. Happily for the prisoners committed to his charge, their gaoler, unlike the generality of his species, was considerate and humane, and did his best to alleviate the hardships of their position; allowing them free access to the corridors, and liberty to enjoy the companionship of their fellow captives. Among these were members of some of the best families in France—nobles, priests, ex-ministers, and generals—by all of whom the actors were greeted with cordiality and respect, and no one evinced more sympathy with their unmerited sufferings than the illustrious Malesherbes.

As a matter of course, during their confinement at the Madelonnettes, each prisoner had to shift for himself; and much merriment was excited by the awkwardness displayed by some of them in the performance of their daily duties. St. Prix especially, to whose share it had previously fallen to represent on the stage the monarchs of Greece and Rome, was thoroughly out of his element when armed with a broom, which he held as if it had been a bayonet. 'Poor Agamemnon!' he was wont to complain with ludicrous solemnity while accomplishing his allotted task with ineffable disgust; 'who would ever have thought that thou wouldst one day be reduced to *this*!'

To add to their discomfort, the insufficiency of ventilation and the strict seclusion to which they were subjected—for, although a space of open ground adjoined one side of the prison, they were

not allowed to profit by it—threatened seriously to endanger the health of the inmates; and at length, on the instance of Fouquier Tinville, the public accuser, who was mortally afraid of the spread of contagious disorders, a number of ‘suspects,’ including the entire body of actors, were transferred to Picpus, where, as far as accommodation was concerned, they were infinitely more at their ease. During the first weeks succeeding their removal they were permitted to see and correspond with their relatives; but this act of grace was soon revoked, by order of the Commune, and all communication between them and the external world absolutely forbidden.

Their friends, however, were not idle. More than one plan of escape was projected, but only to be abandoned as impracticable; and influential members of the different political clubs were indirectly sounded with the view of obtaining their intercession in favour of the prisoners, but in vain. No one chose or dared to encounter the risk of so perilous a mission, it being well known that at the instigation of Collot d’Herbois six out of the number had been already condemned, and their names marked with a G, symbolical of the guillotine: these were Dazincourt, Fleury, Louise and Emilie Contat, Mlles. Raucourt and Lange, the others, with few exceptions, being destined to transportation.

At this critical juncture Fleury’s sister, Madame Sainville, who had formerly acted with Collot d’Herbois at Bordeaux, and had rendered him more than one important service during his theatrical career, resolved to beard the tiger in his den, and implore him to befriend her brother and his fellow-sufferers for old acquaintance’ sake. He received her very coldly, and at once cut short her entreaties by an abrupt refusal. ‘Citizen Sainville,’ he said, ‘times are changed, and it suits me to forget the past. Thy brother and his companions are aristocrats, and as such deserve death; if I had only to lift my finger in order to save them, I would sooner cut it off, as,’ he added, with a malevolent smile, ‘their heads will be before many days are over!’

There still remained to the courageous petitioner the hope of interesting in her behalf the leaders of the Jacobin section, Danton and Robespierre; and the first-named having been represented to her as not altogether insensible to pity, she boldly solicited an audience, and was immediately admitted to his presence. No sooner, however, had she explained the motive of her coming than he sternly refused to listen, curtly giving her to understand that he declined to interfere in the matter, and dismissing her without another word. Her last resource was Robespierre, and in

his case a formal application for an interview was indispensable. She therefore wrote to him, and received a reply informing her that at a certain hour on the following day he would willingly hear what she had to say.

On arriving, she found the 'incorruptible' engaged in examining some lace brought for his inspection by an elderly female, a well-known *brocanteuse* of the period, busily occupied in unfolding the contents of her box. 'You are Citizen Sainville?' said Robespierre; and, without waiting for an answer, beckoned her to approach. 'Give me your opinion of this lace,' he continued; 'you ought to understand these things.'

The strange contrast between the idea she had formed of the terrible dictator on whose verdict the life of her brother depended, and the effeminate-looking, coquettishly attired *muscadin* before her, so utterly confounded Madame Sainville that for a few seconds she was incapable of replying; but, recovering herself by a strong effort, she at once pronounced the lace to be beautiful and of exquisite workmanship.

'And the quality?' he inquired. 'Is there anything finer?'

'Some prefer English point-lace.'

'Oh, that is beyond my means. What would be said of me if I indulged in such a luxury? Was Citizen Fleury in the habit of wearing English point-lace on the stage?'

'Never of his own purchasing; it would have been too costly.'

'True,' mechanically replied Robespierre, absorbed in admiring contemplation of the lace. 'You may leave it,' he added, turning to the dealer, 'at the price agreed on. And now, Citizen Sainville——'

At this inopportune moment he was interrupted by the arrival of one of his familiars with a letter, after glancing at which he announced with apparent regret that he was called away on important business, and must postpone hearing what his visitor had to communicate until another occasion. 'Or stay,' he suggested; 'let me have a statement in writing, and it shall be attended to.'

Rightly interpreting these words as a hint that the audience was at an end, and perfectly convinced that the delivery of the letter was merely a ruse to enable Robespierre to rid himself of an importunate suppliant, Madame Sainville despondently retraced her steps homewards, abandoning all hope of accomplishing her object, and little imagining that a new auxiliary was already in the field, determined at the risk of his life to succeed where every one else had hitherto failed, and rescue the intended victims from a fate which, exposed as they were to the certainty of being

speedily summoned before the tribunal, appeared almost inevitable.

Charles de Labussière, a younger son of an ancient but impoverished family, abandoned at an early age to his own resources, had commenced his career by serving as a volunteer in the regiment of Savoie-Carignan, and had subsequently tried his fortune on the stage, playing for some months the Jocrisses at a Parisian minor theatre. Soon wearying of this fancy, he gradually drifted into an idle and purposeless existence; and, as long as his slender means lasted, amused himself by becoming notorious as a mystifier and practical joker. His funds being at length entirely exhausted, he was induced, much against his will, to accept a post offered him by a member of the Committee of Public Safety, as the surest method of escaping the charge—an unpardonable crime in those days—of lukewarm patriotism. His principal duty was the examination of the accusatory papers daily received from the various sections, each of which had to be duly analysed and reported to the committee, as a preparatory step to the judgment of the victims. No one was more unfitted for the performance of this repugnant task than Labussière. Aided by an equally compassionate colleague, he conceived the hazardous idea of suppressing, at the imminent risk of detection, whatever charges appeared to him most dangerous to the safety of the accused; and it is an undoubted fact that, from the period of his installation in office to the ninth Thermidor, no less than eleven hundred persons were indebted to him for their lives.

Among the denunciations which passed through his hands, not the least important were the documents relating to the six doomed members of the *Comédie Française*, any one of which was sufficient to insure their condemnation. These he carefully laid aside, and destroyed when an opportunity occurred, by soaking them in water and tearing them into fragments, which he afterwards threw into the Seine. In vain Fouquier Tinville continually demanded the requisite authority for placing the 'aristocratic histrions' at the bar; in vain their inveterate enemy Collot d'Herbois chafed at the delay, and insisted on the production of the damnatory proofs against them; not a scrap of paper was found to compromise them, and, thanks to the courage of their unsuspected ally, they remained unmolested until, after eleven months' captivity, the fall of Robespierre finally opened their prison doors, and the reign of terror was a thing of the past.

CHARLES HERVEY.

At the Sign of the Ship.¹

BALLADE INTRODUCTORY.

WHAT Men collect, what Men debate,
 What Bain has bought, or Christie sold,
 Whatever serves to illustrate
 The Fashions of the Days of Old,
 How Cambridge pulled, how Oxford bowled,
 Wild Lore of races white or black,
 Of these shall many a tale be told
 In this our Stall of Bric-à-brac !

Strange wrecks from rarest Books that Fate
 Hath hardly saved from Moth and Mould ;
 Quaint traits of manners, old or late,
 Of Cloth of Frieze, and Cloth of Gold,
 Faint echoes that the Ages cold
 To our warm Age send ringing back,
 We gather all, we all enfold
 In this our Stall of Bric-à-brac.

Tales of the Church, and of the State,
 Of how men prayed—and how they polled—
 We tell ; and talk of Flies, and Bait,
 And ancient Missals golden-scrolled ;
 And here, perchance, shall songs be trolled—
 Of holidays, when work is slack—
 We shall do everything—but scold
 In this our Stall of Bric-à-brac.

ENVOY.

Then come, ye merry Buyers bold,
 What is 't ye seek, what is 't ye lack
 We've many wares, and manifold,
 In this our Stall of Bric-à-brac !

¹ Under this title it is intended to publish some pages of Gossip on Men and Books.

* * *

Long, long ago, when the Warden of Merton College, Mr. Bullock Marsham, issued an election address, a newspaper leading article began its comments on the performance with the Livian quotation, *Bos locutus est* !

Lord Randolph Churchill 'got a laugh' lately by applying the old tag to Mr. Gladstone. *Bos locutus est*, he said, and added *procumbit humi Bos*, 'the Boss falls earthwards.' The pun on the Latin *Bos*, and the American *Boss* ('head-man,' 'chief'), was good enough for a public meeting.

What is the origin of this word 'Boss' for 'master' or 'lord'? The dictionaries derive it from the Dutch *Baas*, though some, without adducing authorities, call 'Boss' for 'master' provincial English. Dr. Murray's great new dictionary has not reached 'Boss' yet, or, all events, the part containing 'Boss' has not been published. I therefore make Dr. Murray and his allies a present of 'Boss' as used by John Knox. In the 'History of the Reformation' (Paisley, 1791), vol. i. p. 175, Knox says—'The Bishop preached to his Jackmen, and some old Bosses of the Town,' which was Ayr. Probably by 'old Bosses' Knox means local magnates, people of importance. Or he may mean 'boss' in the Scotch sense, 'empty,' and by 'old Bosses' empty-headed old idiots.

* * *

'Arm-pitting among the Greeks' seems a rather obscure topic, especially as even we moderns no longer arm-pit to any considerable extent. Mr. Kittredge has expended a great deal of learning (in the *American Journal of Philology*) in showing how, and why, and whom the Greeks 'arm-pitted.' The disagreeable topic is mentioned both by Æschylus and Sophocles, who insist that Agamemnon was arm-pitted by Clytemnestra. The old Greek lexicons combine to assert that the dead man's extremities were cut off, neatly tied together, and slung under his arms by a cord fastened round the neck. Why did the Greeks in general, and Clytemnestra in particular, use this rite, and so habitually that there was actually a word for the operation? Mr. Kittredge demonstrates that the ceremony was intended to maim the ghost of the deceased. He could not go about without his toes, nor grasp a weapon without his fingers. In the same spirit, and for the same purpose, murderers among the Australian blacks still cut off the dead

man's thumb, that his ghost may not use spear nor club with much effect. In Turkey, the head of a decapitated True Believer is placed under his armpit, that of a Jew or Christian between his legs. We expect that kind of thing from savages, but it is interesting to find the Greeks of the age of Pericles, and later, still so deeply stained by savage folklore that they mention 'arm-pitting' as a natural precaution.

* * *

THE PARADISE OF PROGRESS.

THE WAIL OF THE POET OF THE FUTURE.¹

In old *Anno Domini*
 (Vanished hath the ancient style),
 Men could look upon the sky,
 If the earth were wholly vile.
 Now—alas 'the heavy change'!—
 All our star-gazing is done;
 Terrible machines, and strange,
 Glide between us and the Sun!

Land-laws—once they left us when
 Our Democracy was new—
 Gaily they came back again,
 Came the Sea-laws, Air-laws too!
 'Fined for trespassing on Brine,'
 Every day we note it less,
 'Killed when bathing on the line
 Of a submarine express!'

In old *Anno Domini*,
 In the happy days grown dim,
 Men could sail upon the seas
 At their pleasure—dive or swim.
 On the sands the children played;
 Now the sand, they tell us, fails;
 There's a tax on every spade,
 Stringent rules concerning pails!

In old *Anno Domini*
 Men were simple, merry, kind,
 Never struggled for the Sea,
 Never quarrelled for the Wind.

¹ By the author of *That Very Mab*.

AT THE SIGN OF THE SHIP.

Earth hath been a peaceful place !
 Free from folly, free from jars,
 Were the simple, early race
 That could look upon the stars !

Well, perhaps it is natural that the poet of the future should think so !

* * *

Where is the body of Molière ? There is a talk of restoring it to the Panthéon, but the talk is vain. The poet's grave, with that of La Fontaine, is at present shown to the curious at Père-Lachaise. But there is excellent reason to believe that the actual tomb of Molière is as unknown as the tomb of Arthur or the burial-place of Moses. Few great men, certainly, have had so many adventures after their decease. In the first place, as every one knows, the libertine Archbishop of Paris, Harlay, made great difficulties about allowing Molière (who died before he had time to receive the last rites of the Church) to be buried in holy ground. Probably by the intervention of Louis XIV. he was interred, in the darkness of night, 'in the Cemetery of St. Joseph, at the foot of the cross.' His friend, La Grange, says that there was a tombstone of about a foot in height. The date of this evidence is 1673, the year of the death of the comedian. There can be no doubt that Molière was, in the first place, laid in consecrated ground. But, in 1674, a poetaster, named Les Isles Le Bas, published in a small volume ('L'Apollon Français') a sonnet in which he declares that Molière was interred in the burial-place of stillborn children, those unhappy dwellers in a limbo outside Paradise. The pious poet calls Molière *un infâme*, and writes—

Molière, baptisé, perd l'effet du baptême,
 Et dans sa sépulture il devient un mort-né.

'Molière, though baptised, loses the grace of baptism, and in his burial becomes as the stillborn child.' Thus, in 1673, the poet was laid among the Christian dead ; in 1674 he was thought to have been relegated to a mortuary limbo.

In 1732 we have news about his tomb. Titon du Tillet, in the *Parnasse Français*, speaks of a monument in stone which Molière's widow raised above his grave 'in the middle of the cemetery of St. Joseph.' He adds that the stone was split by a great fire which Madame Molière had lighted on the stone slab,

to warm the poor in a hard winter. But, adds Titon du Tillet, 'an old chaplain has informed me that Molière does not lie there' (that is, in his original resting-place), 'but further away, near the chaplain's house.' Now M. Moland explains all by the hypothesis that Molière was, indeed, buried before the eyes of his friends at the foot of the cross, but that he was secretly disinterred by the jealous clergy, and reburied among the unchristened dead. In 1792 the Revolutionary party wished to deposit the ashes of Molière in the Panthéon. The chaplain of the period directed the search for his coffin to be made, not at the foot of the cross in the centre of the cemetery, but in unconsecrated ground at the outside of the burial-ground. There a coffin, obviously interred with maimed rites and in a shallow trench, was discovered, and the contents were honoured, or dishonoured, by the Revolutionary fanatics, as all of Molière that was mortal. The whole story is complicated by another legend, published in 1780, to the effect that the relics of Molière were removed, in 1750, to the interior of the chapel of St. Joseph or the church of St. Eustache. Thus only one thing is pretty probable. The so-called ashes of Molière, removed to the Panthéon in 1792 and to Père-Lachaise in 1817, are almost certainly not the remains of the poet. The fate that Shakespeare (not without knowledge of human folly) dreaded for his own bones has befallen the author of *Tartuffe*. Unknown is the grave of Molière.

* * *

I know not whether the American phrase, 'to give a person away,' to 'give yourself away,' meaning to reveal your own or another's secret, is of provincial English origin. Did it cross over with the Pilgrim Fathers in the *May Flower*, or is it a recent bit of slang? 'Who giveth this woman away?' asked the rural American parson in the wedding service. 'I *could*,' came the voice of a young man from the gallery, 'but I'd never be so mean.' Such were the compromising consequences of an ambiguity in language. It appears to me that M. Fortuné du Boisgobey, the admired author of romances which are translated into English and published in red covers, has lately 'given himself away,' and revealed the secrets of his craft. When Mr. James Payn, some years ago, fluttered the hearts of parents by proposing literature as an open and easy profession, *he* did not 'give himself away.' He did not tell his anxious readers *how* to write a story. He said that they must have a story to tell. But how to get the story? That was not explained; and to this day people keep asking 'how it is

done.' In his new novel, *La Voilette Bleue* ('The Blue Veil'), M. Boisgobey shows, I think, how *he* does it. He seems first to imagine a striking and highly improbable situation. Then he 'writes up to it.'

By the way, I had always fancied that to 'live up to' anything was a modern expression, not much older than Mr. Oscar Wilde, and Blue China regarded as an ideal. But Izaak Walton uses the phrase, and probably it was old in his time.

To return from this digression, M. Boisgobey gets his unparalleled and inexplicable situation or event, and then he works back to explain it, and the explanation is the story, which only needs embroidery to be a romance.

In 'The Blue Veil' the process is easily traced. The novel ends with what is clearly the original idea from which it sprang. Visiting Notre-Dame, the cathedral dear to Victor Hugo, M. Boisgobey must have been struck by the number and intricacy of the passages, galleries, and covered ways leading to and from the towers, roofs, spiral stairs, and battlements. 'What a place,' he must have said to himself, 'for a duel in the American fashion,' like that in which Silas Fixings encountered Judge Lynch. The combatants, it will be remembered, were armed with rifles and turned loose in a forest, to stalk and shoot each other. Now, the 'cloisters branched like mighty woods' afford, M. Boisgobey must have thought, equally excellent 'cover' for duellists. A duel in Notre-Dame! There was the germinal idea. All that had to be done now was to lead up to it. The author had to imagine a series of circumstances that would result in two men hunting each other through the cathedral, as it were through a forest primeval. This did not give him much trouble. He worked back, devised the series of events, and there lay the skeleton of the story called 'The Blue Veil.' That is 'how it is done.' And now, young authors, as the trick is so easy, go and do likewise.

* * *

There is another mystery of literature, Collaboration. How is *that* done? people often ask. The servant-girl who had read 'Dombey and Son' told Mr. Dickens that she fancied it needed 'five or six men to put *Dombey* together.' Most persons, on the other hand, cannot comprehend how two authors ever succeed in putting together anything. The secrets of collaboration have been well kept. 'One of us writes with a gold pen, and the other with a steel pen,' said a famous collaborator, when he was

cross-questioned about his mystery. The reply throws no light on the secret; nor, perhaps, does the pretty fantastic answer of Madame Alphonse Daudet. It is known that M. Daudet, the author of the 'Nabab,' of 'Jack,' of 'Rois en Exil,' speaks of his wife as his collaborator, and has even dedicated to her, in that character, the 'large paper' edition of the 'Nabab.' An indiscreet person has asked Madame Daudet how she and her lord work together—'how it is done.'

'Our collaboration is a Japanese fan,' says this ingenious lady. 'On one side of the fan is the picture, the subject, the characters, the landscape. That is M. Daudet's side. On the reverse are petals of flowers, butterflies, a tendril straying across, a touch of gilt, a dab of paint. That is *my* side.'

Such is the explanation of Madame Daudet, and perhaps it makes the mystery of collaboration no clearer than it was before.

* * *

All precious things discovered late
To those that seek them issue forth,

says Lord Tennyson. I have long sought, and at last found, 'La Cravate,' a history of neckties, written in a more polished age, apparently by Henri Monnier (Paris: 1827). The very word cravat (derived from the Croats, a regiment of whom, all cravated, arrived in Paris in 1600) has been nearly lost. We no longer wrap up our throats in thirty-two ways, which could be taught in sixteen lessons. Cravats, even in Paris, disappeared before the Revolution, when citizens named Brutus or Timoléon wore their free necks bare, which, also, was convenient when it came to being guillotined. But, as the Terror went out, cravats came in, and mounted as high as the human ears, while they overlapped the exquisite chin. In this reaction the fashionable neck could not be turned round, but General Lassalle's life was saved by his cravat, which stopped a pistol-bullet. In 1815 the English had 'their so-called victories' printed on kerchiefs, which they wore round their vainglorious necks even in Paris. Napoleon changed his luck, and lost Waterloo, by wearing a white cravat in place of the black necktie (twice round) which adorned his person at Lodi, Marengo, Austerlitz, Wagram, and other successful encounters. The most illustrious way of tying the cravat was in 'the Gordian knot,' much like that still worn by people who wear pins. There were also the Irish, the Sentimental (as in modern evening dress), the American, the Oriental (like a turban),

and the mathematical knot, which defies description. The 'Ball' knot was not a knot, but a simpler arrangement, fixed by pins to the braces or fastened to the shirt. No one under forty wore the 'Gastronomic' cravat, which 'unties of itself in case of apoplexy'—a most valuable arrangement. The knot *Colin* is still worn by Frenchmen, the 'Hunting Knot' is like a corkscrew, the Italian is run through a ring. No one who respected himself could travel with less than eighty cravats and an iron for smoothing them with. Such was 'the number and hardness'—as the Prayer Book says—of the laws and regulations of the cravat under the happy reign of Louis XVIII. and in the consulship of Brummel.

'AT THE SIGN OF THE LYRE.'¹

A little of Horace, a little of Prior,
A sketch of a Milkmaid, a lay of the Squire—
These, these are 'on draught 'At the Sign of the Lyre!'

A child in Blue Ribbons that sings to herself,
A talk of the Books on the Sheraton shelf,
A sword of the Stuarts, a wig of the Guelph,

A *lai*, a *pantoum*, a *ballade*, a *rondeau*,
A pastel by Greuze, and a sketch by Moreau,
And the chimes of the rhymes that sing sweet as they go,

A fan, and a folio, a ringlet, a glove,
'Neath a dance by Laguerre on the ceiling above,
And a dream of the days when the bard was in love,

A scent of dead roses, a glance at a pun,
A toss of old powder, a glint of the sun,
They meet in the volume that Dobson has done!

If there's more that the heart of a man can desire,
He may search, in his Swinburne, for fury and fire;
If he's wise—he'll alight at 'The Sign of the Lyre!'

* * *

Was honest Izaak Walton capable of a kind of literary forgery?
Did he write poetry by stealth, and blush to find it fame, and

¹ *At the Sign of the Lyre*. By Austin Dobson. (Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co.) London: 1885.

smuggle it into the world as the work of a friend? Lately I picked up a rare little book (the British Museum had no copy of it when Beloe wrote his 'Anecdotes'), '*Thealma and Clearchus*, a Pastoral History in smooth and easie verse, written long since by John Chalkhill, Esq., an Acquaintant and Friend of Edmund Spenser. London: Printed for *Benj. Tooke*, at the Ship in *S. Paul's Churchyard*, 1683.' Probably, or at least possibly, the Ship was the Ship at whose sign these fragments of talk are still vended.

'*Thealma and Clearchus*' has a preface, dated 1678, by Izaak Walton, who says of the author that he was 'a man generally known and as well beloved, a gentleman, a scholar . . . useful, quiet, virtuous.' Now, who was this John Chalkhill? One of the name is buried in Winchester Cathedral; he died, aged 80, in 1679, and had long been a Fellow of the College. The Chalkhills were connections, by marriage, of Walton's second wife, and all this looks as if the John Chalkhill of the tomb in Winchester was the author of '*Thealma and Clearchus*.' But he cannot possibly have been the friend of Edmund Spenser, who died in 1599, the year when Chalkhill was born. Have we any other poetical remains of Chalkhill? We have the song, and a capital song—

O the gallant fisher's life,
It is the best of any.

Of that song we know, on Walton's own confession, that he himself was partly the author. 'I was forced to patch it up by the help of mine own invention, who am not excellent at poetry.'

The question arises, Is Chalkhill, in Walton's books, anything but a name for Walton as a poet? There was a real Chalkhill, and a copy of Walton's '*Lives*' (1670) presented 'to my brother Chalkhill' exists. But there is nothing elsewhere to show that Chalkhill was a poet. '*Thealma and Clearchus*' ends in the middle of a line:—

Thealma lives.

*And here the Author dy'd, and I hope the
reader will be sorry.*

This would have been a flippant way of alluding to the recent death of a friend, and very unlike Walton. We must conclude, either that '*Thealma and Clearchus*' was actually 'written long since' by an ancestor of Walton's friend, Chalkhill, who may possibly have been a friend of Edmund Spenser's, or that Walton

wrote it himself. The style is Elizabethan; the lines 'overflow' into each other, quite unlike the distichs introduced by Waller and perfected by Pope. We know that Walton disliked this modern style, and preferred the older manner which is retained in 'Thealma and Clearchus.' Fishing is lovingly alluded to whenever the author can find, or make, an opportunity. The poem itself is probably a rhymed version of a Greek novel, or of a French imitation of a Greek novel. The author speaks much of 'the seashore of Arcadia,' and of an island off the Arcadian coast where potatoes grew. He cannot have been stronger in geography than Shakespeare was when he introduced a desert country by the seashore of Bohemia.

* * *

Water of Time for Passion of the Heart!

It is a beautiful line, certainly. It reads as if it came out of Rossetti, or from a play of Webster's, or of Ford's, or even of Marlowe's. 'Water of Time for Passion of the Heart,' it means the draught of many years that lulls grief as surely almost, if not so swiftly, as those fabled Lethæan streams where the souls *securos latices et longa oblivia potant!*

Had we only the quoted line as a fragment this would sound very fair criticism of the higher sort, but it is all wrong. 'Water of Time for Passion of the Heart' is but the name of a recipe in an old cookery book: '*A Queen's Delight*, or the Art of Conserving and Candyng. Never before published. Printed by T. Winter, for Nat. Brook, at the Angel in Gresham College. 1668.' The 'Time' referred to is only thyme, and the water is a draught to cure a stitch. Does any one wish to try our fathers' prescription, 'Take a quart of white wine and a pint of sack, steep in it as much broad thyme as will wet, put to it of Galingale and Calamus Aromaticus, of each one ounce, Cloves, Mace, Ginger, and grains of Paradise two drams, steep these all night, the next morning distill in an ordinary still, drink it warm with sugar.' It reads as if it would be good on the ice at luncheon. But alas for the poetry of cookery books!

ANDREW LANG.

The 'Donna.'

I.

BY THE EDITOR.

IT is with mingled feelings that the Editor presents his second annual statement of account and record of the work done by the 'Donna'—feelings of regret that the need for this work of mercy should still exist, and feelings of thankfulness and pride that so noble and successful an effort to carry it on should have been made by the readers of the magazine. The accounts for the past year are as follows:—

DR.		CR.	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Cost of food . . .	102 11 4½	Balance from last year . .	304 16 11
Man's wages . . .	27 15 0	By sale of food . . .	68 7 7
Ground rent (Tower). .	6 0 0	Subscriptions from November 1884 to October 1885,	
Standing rent . . .	1 10 0	as per magazine, including	
Cleaning and repairs . .	1 0 0	3 <i>l.</i> 14 <i>s.</i> for little James .	175 10 0
To Clifton Home, for little		From a friend for the cripple	
cripple for one year . .	6 0 0	James	2 6 0
Subscriptions to the 'Don'	12 15 6		
" " " Sisters .	1 0 0		
Balance in hand for 'Donna'	392 8 7½		
Total	<u>551 0 6</u>	Total	<u>551 0 6</u>

The accounts present several satisfactory points. The first is that at the year's end the balance is 87*l.* 11*s.* 8½*d.* better than that which was brought forward from the previous year. This is due to the fact that the demand for food has been less during the past year than it was in 1883-84. It must be remembered that the 'Donna' was started for the benefit of the unemployed, and therefore its accounts form an excellent guide to the state of the labour market in the neighbourhood of Tower Hill. But by far the happiest feature in the year's working is the fact that it was found possible, owing to slack trade, to shut up shop altogether for three months last summer. There are few shopkeepers to whom it is real good news to hear that trade is bad at their establishment; but a customer of the 'Donna' must be a man in dire distress, a man who has nothing but the kindly help of the 'Lady of Tower Hill' between him and that

saddest last resort—the workhouse. It is certain, therefore, that the news that the 'Donna' rested from her daily journey during the months of August, September, and October will be satisfactory to the readers of the magazine. On November 16 she resumed work, and is now daily bringing succour and relief to hundreds whom the inexorable and inexplicable forces of civilisation have reduced to a plight more pitiable than that of naked savages, or even—inasmuch as their capacity to suffer is infinitely greater—than that of the beasts of the field. The balance in hand will enable the Sisters to carry on the work in all probability for two years more, even if no more subscriptions come in; but the Editor feels confident that this is a work which will not be allowed to drop, and that so long as there is a need for her, the 'Donna' will make her daily journey.

The little cripple 'James,' who was sent by the liberality of a few subscribers to the Home for Crippled Children at Clifton, has now nearly finished his year there. The Editor has received the following letter from Mrs. Bridger, the secretary of the Home:—

13 Lansdown Place, Clifton, Bristol, Nov. 11.

Dear Sir,—Do you think you could again enlist the sympathies of your readers on behalf of the poor boy towards whose support at our Home for Crippled Children they contributed 6*l.* last year? Members of our committee, in their private capacity, paid the remaining 6*l.*, as the committee found the Institution too poor to admit of his being taken half price. We have thus done our part. His year is up December 29, but our Lady Superintendent says he will certainly die if he returns home at that time. I hope we shall be able to keep him through January, and then send him for a short change to the seaside. If we can manage this, it would be the middle of February before he left for home. If any one, or any number of people, would then undertake to put him in the Kensington Home for three years, he would be taught a trade, and be able to earn his living; if not, at his parents' death, there is nothing but the workhouse before him for *life*.

I am, dear Sir,

Truly yours,

ELIZA P. BRIDGER, H.S.

The Editor has guaranteed the expense of maintaining the lad in the Kensington Home for one year, and should any of his readers care to send subscriptions for this purpose he will be glad to receive them.

The Editor begs to acknowledge a cheque for 1*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* 'Collected for the Donna by A. K. L.,' and 1*l.* 1*s.* from Miss Hasker.

Miss Trench, to whose article, 'At the Docks,' the starting of the 'Donna' is due, has kindly sent the following short paper on its work for last year.

II.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'CHARLES LOWDER.'

THE Lady of Tower Hill, in her blue mantle, is seen daily for one hour only. Her appearance is eagerly looked for, and during her stay she is surrounded, courted, and admired; the roughest of the rough being softened and fascinated by her charms. 'Now, then, is this your fine Walking Sausage-roll Shop?' exclaimed a great brawny fellow, as he lurched up to the food-truck, which has now for two years been supported by the readers of LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE. 'Look, you,' he thundered out to the truck man, 'I'm the strongest fellow of our lot, and I'll stand no nonsense. Hand us over tuppence at once, or——' A volley of oaths followed.

The man was well known as one of a notorious gang of bad characters, the terror of the neighbourhood; he had been convicted over one hundred and fifty times. The truck driver answered him gently, telling him the intention of the work—to help the destitute. The big fellow listened, interested in spite of his brutality, and turned away with blessings instead of oaths on his lips. 'It's a fine thing for the working-man, and God bless them as set it up,' he said, 'but it'll never do my soul any good.' Poor fellow! at least his words showed that already a touch of good had come to him through the 'Donna's' guardians, and, in truth, she seems to have a good effect on men's hearts as well as their bodies. An old customer was so noted for his selfishness that he had obtained the nickname of 'Skin-the-Goat'; he was always on the watch for the piece of pudding with most currants in it, and no greedy child could snatch at it more unhesitatingly. One morning, however, to the Sister's amazement, 'Skinny' bought no less than four pennyworth of pudding, and divided it among eight hungry men in the crowd. He had never before been known to give away a morsel.

Two men came to the 'Donna' and told the following story of themselves :—

'We have been out on the tramp to Derby and back, and we did wish we could come across a stall like this. We *was* hungry, and my mate says to me, "Don't you remember one of the ladies at the truck told us we might always pray to God when we were in want, and ask Him to help us?" So, suiting the action to the

word, we just looked about for a quiet corner to put up a bit of a prayer in. It was getting dark, and we had nowhere to sleep—mostly we slept in the "Unions." Well, we soon see an empty barn; so we all five went in, and my mate says, "Bill, you've been to the mission service at Dock Street, so you're the best to put up the prayer." After thinking a bit I remembered one as says, "Give us this day our daily bread," and Jem he says that it means something more than breakfast and supper; he thought it meant a little for our souls too. Well, just as we was in the middle of the prayer, the door opened, and a bobbie turns his bull's-eye right on us—and then he just draws back again, and we finish. When we've done he says, "I's seed many a tramp on this road, but never one on his knees before." He then gives us his own supper, and sixpence to get breakfast with, and tells us we may stop in the barn if we clear out before daylight. So you see, ma'am, God was as good as you'd said He'd be, and just gave us what we asked for at once.'

Up to last April the 'Donna' was the busiest of all the four trucks which daily bring cooked food to the hiring-grounds of our poorest. 'The Hotel,' she was called. 'Don't know what we should do without this 'ere truck,' one customer was overheard saying; 'I don't feel the same man I did some months back, and as to you, Bill, why, your friends won't know you when next they see you—you are that filled out.'

'Please give us one of them apple dumplings,' said a wan-looking man. 'Oh, it is so good and so tasty. I ain't felt up to eating anything for three days. I have been laid up, and seem to turn agin' the food my missus gets for me (crust and watered tea-leaves), but this *is* good; and now I must save a bit for her, for she's down with the rheumatics.'

Two very ragged men came to buy; one had a halfpenny, the other, a number of stale crusts. They asked for two basins, and equally dividing the crusts, asked that a farthing's-worth might be poured over each. 'Oh! Sister, this is a boon to us poor out-of-work men,' they said. 'If we couldn't come here with our halfpennies, where ever *could* we take them to? No shop would give us anything to speak of for a halfpenny.' Indeed, one of the chief boons bestowed by the 'Donna' and her fellow-trucks is that the smallest and cheapest portions of food can be bought at their stalls, and are as good as the largest. One man came very timidly and asked for a halfpennyworth of pudding. When it was given he stood waiting. 'I said a ha'porth, please!' On

being assured that he would not have to pay more for it, he said : 'Sister, this is the first time I've been here ; and some of the boatmen' (these are not *unemployed*) 'told me this was a money-making concern. Perhaps they were joking me ; but, leastways, I'm sure you don't make your money on ha'porths of pudding.' 'Nor on soup either,' chimed in another man.

'Could you spare me two-pence of pudding, ma'am ?' This was a *large* order, and one or two looked anxiously to see if the stock would hold out. 'I wouldn't ask for such a lot, Sister, only my missus has just been took to the hospital to be operated on for cancer, and'—wiping his sleeve across his eyes—'they gives no hopes of her being cured. I've five little mouths to feed, and they always comes to meet me with their pinafores held out for a bit of pudding. I've had a fourpenny job to-day, so they shan't be disappointed.'

The speaker had only been out of hospital himself a few weeks, having been in three months with rheumatic fever.

Nor is it only dock-labourers who are grateful to the 'Donna.' W., a man who had formerly been in good work as a painter and decorator, and whose last job had been in Rochester Cathedral, came to London for work, and was for months out of employment. He came to the 'Donna' looking more like a ghost than a man, and had a halfpenny-worth of soup. Next day, he came again, asked for a penny basin, and was soon seen sitting by the Tower railway with his wife, a poor starved-looking woman with a young baby in her arms, and three little boys, barefooted and half clothed. W. had the basin, and with a spoon was feeding them all in turns.

After April the custom slackened at our 'Donna,' partly from the fruit season bringing work for many, either in the country, or as hawkers in the streets ; and partly, the Sisters thought, in consequence of the completion of the Mark Lane station on the Metropolitan Railway. A wharf had been erected close to the 'Donna,' while the railway was still unfinished, for the convenience of unloading the barges laden with timber, stone, &c., and the unemployed men used to hang about, in hundreds even, on the chance of a job.

'The other day,' one of the helpers at the trucks writes, 'there was only a call for a few, and I watched one poor little old man vainly trying to press in with the crowd ; he could not reach high enough to obtain a ticket. He was just giving up in despair when his mates took pity on him, and made way for the

grey head, crying to the foreman, "Give the old man a ticket!" It was really unselfish of them, for it gave them one less chance of work.'

A gentleman passing the Dock gates one morning while the men were struggling for tickets, asked a friend who was with him if he had ever seen such a sight. 'Yes,' was the reply, 'in the slave-markets abroad.'

One man got his dinner at the food-truck by selling his house-flannel and a few bits of rags for a penny; another sold his jacket for fourpence to his mate, and then came to buy soup.

'A basin of stew and a roll, please,' said one customer. 'It's a treat to be able to have this now that the cold weather is coming on. So little work to be got that a man does not know what to do for the best. I've earnt 2s. 10d. all the week. That's a lot to keep a family on, ain't it? I heard as how there was a boat going to start the other night at six o'clock, so I came down just to try my luck, but she did not come up till the next morning. So after waiting till I got tired I came away, and coming past your place I thought I'd go in and hear your mission, but I felt so miserable that I didn't go in. However, if I lives so long, I will go next week.'

One poor, miserable working-man asked for some cake. He had been working since 5 A.M., and had eaten nothing since 4 P.M. the day before.

'Now,' said he, after having satisfied his own hunger, 'I'll take some home for the old woman; it will be a treat for her. Ah, it's a good thing for the poor people; there ought to be a few more of 'em, that's all I've got to say about it.'

Another in getting the money from his pocket had the misfortune to drop it. The poor fellow was deeply grieved at his loss, 'for,' said he, 'it is the only penny I've got; and I have only earned 2s. all this week.' After about twenty minutes' hard work he managed to extract it from the place into which it had rolled, so that he was enabled to have his dinner after all.

'Thank God,' said he, 'for that. It's the first bit I have had to eat since yesterday.'

The prime favourite among all the varieties of food sold is, and always has been, the pudding, which is hot, nourishing, and 'very filling at the price.' There are two kinds, one made of flour and suet, with a little sugar; the other, called 'college,' of bread, currants, and treacle. One halfpenny purchases a large

¹ In Dock Street.

slice of pudding, and for a penny a portion is obtained which few who had breakfasted could possibly get through for dinner. Eleven thousand five hundred portions of pudding have been sold in nine months, which shows tolerably plainly that the 'Donna's' customers have been hungry ones. Soup, stew, and sausage-rolls have all been sold in portions of three or four thousand. The only falling off is in the summer fare of sandwiches and slices of cake; not that they are unpopular, but that in summer the crowd of hungry men is thinner. It is amusing, as well as satisfactory, to hear their remarks as to any possible profit to the sellers. 'Now I should like to know what profit they can get out of it,' our truck-porter overheard one man saying. 'Look at this cake—why, we would have to pay three-pence for that in a shop; I don't know how they can sell it. I'm always glad when the time comes so as I can have a basin of soup, the best I ever had for the money. You know these Sisters are very good to us dockmen. Let's have a basin of stew now, that will do me for the rest of this day. Well, good-day, old man, and may God bless these ladies, or Sisters as they are called.'

'Here you are, Tom,' said another, 'here's the place I was telling you about for a cheap feed.' 'Oh, is this it?' said the new customer. 'I say, this stew ain't so rough, is it?' 'Rough! no, I reckon it's *proper*.' 'Who makes it?' 'Why, the Sisters; I sees 'em every morning making the pudding, in Dock Street.' 'Well, I'm blowed if I don't take a penn'orth o' pudding home, it'll do to fry up for tea.' 'A sausage-roll, please, ma'am,' said the old *habitué*; then aside to his friend, 'There's no mistake about it, they're fair. I can always do a hard afternoon's work, if I can get it, when I have one of those rolls for dinner. Look at that stew, there's a basin-full for a penny! These Sisters must think of us poor men; I don't know how they can afford to sell at the price. Wet or dry you can see them going to the Docks or coming down to us.'

From the following conversation, noted down by the hearer, we should almost gather that LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE was not unknown to some of our customers:—'Come along to the "Donna," Tom, I'll have a big penn'orth of pudding.'

'Where's that?'

'Oh! you don't know you're alive if you don't know where that is; this chap has got a stall belonging to the Sisters of Mercy, down by the Tower. They do give a lump for a penny, as much as a man can eat with a basin of stew. I'll show you

where it is when we go home ; they got 'em all round the Docks this side o' the water, and a fine thing it is ; they can't get any profit out of it, I wonder how they can afford to sell it so cheap.'

'Oh, I know, they gets it all given to them.'

'No, they don't get all given to them—but some kind gentlemen who take an interest in this sort of thing subscribe to help keep it up.'

'Yes, I seen some o' the papers.'

'Well, it's a very good thing, there's no two ways about it ; if I was a Toff I'd be one o' the first to pay up towards it—I've had many a good feed there when I've only had a couple of pence in my pocket. I wish they had one down by the Surrey Commercial Docks, 'cause there's a lot of us at work there.'

The fame of the 'Donna' has spread even to distant lands. 'Do this belong to Dock Street?' asked an old soldier, after giving an order for a basin of soup and penn'orth of pudding ; 'I have read of the good Sisters when I was out in Bombay, and of the good hot food they send out for poor dockmen : this is the first time I have had my dinner here, and I hope it will not be the last ; I have been out of the army now twelve months, and it's the best dinner I ever had for the money.'

'A penn'orth of cake, please,' said another customer. 'Ah ! it's a great boon this to a poor fellow ; many and many a time when I have been out of work and only had a few 'apence in my pocket, and not knowing the best way to lay it out, I'd a been glad to 'a come down here, but I did not know of it then. There's my son, he says to me the other day, "Old man, I'll tell you where to get a cheap feed when you're hard up—you knows the Tower gates?" 'Yes.' 'Well, then, you know the Subway as goes across to Bermondsey? Well, then, it's just there Sisters of Mercy's place.' This is good cake ; they ought to have a place over the water.'

'Very, very busy !' the Sisters wrote in February. 'A thousand sausage-rolls a week, and 350 *feet* of pudding sent to one dock alone. John, our man-of-all-work in the kitchen, has a heavy time of it. The puddings, made in long tins, do not weigh a trifle, I assure you. A truck has had to be brought into the kitchen to convey them from the baking end of that great underground room to the outgoing end, where they are carried up a ladder into the street, and packed into other trucks awaiting them. It takes a vast amount of labour and forethought properly to pack those trucks, sorting out the soup tins, the puddings, and

the sausages to each. One of our kitchen helpers gave a great sigh of relief when the last truck rolled off replenished, saying, "Well, the day's battle is over at last." Hardly any one guesses this part of the toil.'

Altogether, during nine months, the 'Donna' supplied 24,873 portions of food to men who were almost all wearily waiting for work, and to whom often the one cheerful hour in the day was when the friendly truck appeared on the scene, and the smoking tins gave faithful promise of warmth and comfort for chilled bodies and crushed-down hearts. 'This is the best piece of work that I shall do to-day,' said one poor fellow as he bought his 'ha'porth.' There are only too many who could say the same.

On account of slack custom in summer, the 'Donna' was closed for the first time last August, but appeared again in the old place on November 16. Her fame has travelled northwards. Liverpool wants to know all about our trucks, food, price, how they are managed, &c.

'You see, your business is so successful, ladies,' a policeman said, who came asking politely for information, 'that the gentry in Liverpool think they can't do better than start a truck just like yours up there.'

It is most earnestly to be desired that all should have work enough to enable them to buy food at remunerative prices to the sellers. As has been said before in this magazine, the food on the trucks which travel daily *inside* the dock gates is sold without money loss to the Sisters, though the charity of bringing hot and *wholesome* food within reach of the employed is immense. Many of our readers will have seen Lady Cowper's words in the *Nineteenth Century* for November 1885, as to the 'degeneration' of Londoners caused by 'the enormous difficulty the poor have to contend against in the impossibility of getting good meat,' buying 'their Sunday dinners or week-day scraps at market-stalls where the meat is sold at a very low rate, but which is in every instance stale and bad, and in many cases absolutely *poisonous*. . . . Doctors will tell you that whole families are literally poisoned, and the illnesses and disease consequent on the eating of unsound or diseased meats are among the most frequent in the cases which come under their notice.'

If this be the case with poor in work, what must be the fate of the unemployed? Only the other day we were stopped in the Strand by a block of some sort. Not a demonstration, not a show, not even a deputation—just a crowd of poor anxious-looking

men, many in the prime of life, were thronging the thoroughfare to the actual stoppage of business. The police had to bestir themselves to clear the way; and on inquiry it appeared that a restaurateur hard by had advertised for a porter at 15s. a week, and each of the hundreds assembled was hoping to be the successful candidate.

It is to the aid of such poor unemployed that the Editor of LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE has come; enabling the good Sisters, through the liberal donations of his subscribers and readers, to give them wholesome and warm food for every farthing they can scrape together. Of the patient and persevering labour of these Sisters we cannot think too highly, or of the habits of self-denying devotion to the needs of others, which have borne such good fruit.

When heaped upon the altar lie
 All things to feed the fire,
 One spark, alighting from on high,
 The flames at once aspire.
 But those sweet gums and fragrant woods,
 Its rich material rare,
 By tedious quest o'er lands and floods
 Had first been gathered there.

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The Editor requests that his correspondents will be good enough to write to him informing him of the subject of any article they wish to offer, before sending the MS. A stamped and addressed envelope should accompany the MS. if the writer wishes it to be returned in case of non-acceptance. The Editor can in no case hold himself responsible for accidental loss.



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DR. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S CHLORODYNE

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ORIGINAL AND

IS THE
GREAT SPECIFIC
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CHOLERA.

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COLDS,
ASTHMA,
BRONCHITIS.

DIARRHOEA, DYSENTERY.

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Dr. GIBBON, Army Medical
Staff, Calcutta, states: "2 DOSES
COMPLETELY CURED ME OF
DIARRHOEA."

To J. T. DAVENPORT, London.

DEAR SIR,—We congratulate you
upon the widespread reputation this
justly-esteemed medicine has earned
for itself all over the East. As a re-
medy of general utility, we much
question whether a better is import-
ed, and we shall be glad to hear of its
finding a place in every Anglo-Indian
home. The other brands, we are
happy to say, are now relegated to the
native bazaars, and, judging from
their sale, we fancy their sojourn
there will be but evanescent. We
could multiply instances *ad infinitum*
of the extraordinary efficacy of DR.
COLLIS BROWNE'S CHLORO-
DYNE in Diarrhoea and Dysentery,
Spasms, Cramps, Neuralgia, the Vom-
iting of Pregnancy, and as a general
sedative, that have occurred under
our personal observation during
many years. In Choleraic Diarrhoea,
and even in the more terrible forms
of Cholera itself, we have witnessed
its surprisingly controlling power.

We have never used any other form
of this medicine than Collis Browne's,
from a firm conviction that it is de-
cidedly the best, and also from a sense
of duty we owe to the profession and
the public, as we are of opinion that
the substitution of any other than
Collis Browne's is a deliberate breach
of faith on the part of the chemist to
prescriber and patient alike. — We
are, Sir, faithfully yours, SYMES &
CO., Members of the Pharm. Society of
Great Britain, Chemists of this Excel-
lency the Viceroy of India.

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CHLORODYNE is the TRUE
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CHLORODYNE is a liquid me-
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freshing sleep WITHOUT HEAD-
ACHE, and INVIGORATES the
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MEDY has given rise to many UN-
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DR. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S
CHLORODYNE.—Dr. J. C.
BROWNE (late Army Medical Staff)
DISCOVERED a REMEDY to de-
note which he coined the word CHLO-
RODYNE. Dr. Browne is the SOLE
INVENTOR, and, as the composition
of Chlorodyne cannot possibly be dis-
covered by Analysis (organic sub-
stances defying elimination), and
since the formula has never been pub-
lished, it is evident that any state-
ment to the effect that a compound
is identical with Dr. Browne's Chlo-
rodyne must be false.

This Caution is necessary, as many
persons deceive purchasers by false
representations.

DR. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S
CHLORODYNE.—Vice Chan-
cellor Sir W. PAGE WOOD stated
publicly in Court that Dr. J. COLLIS
BROWNE was UNDOUBTEDLY
the INVENTOR of CHLORODYNE,
that the whole story of the defendant
Freeman was deliberately untrue,
and he regretted to say it had been
sworn to.—See *The Times*, July 13th,
1864.

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